THE OFFICIAL SEGA SATURN M AZINE

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18 PAGES OF INCREDIBLE TIPS

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SEGA No.1 FOR SATURN

ISSUE 22 £2.75
AUGUST 1997



SONIC R

EXCLUSIVE!

SENSES SHATTERING RACING WITH SEGA'S MEGASTAR!

SEGA TOURING CAR

EXCLUSIVE FIRST LOOK!

RESIDENT EVIL

MAMMOTH GUIDE TO THE CAPCOM CLASSIC!

E3 IT'S SHOW TIME

EVERY E3 SATURN GAME INSIDE!



PLUS! QUAKE: UNBELIEVABLE! WIPEOUT 2097 PANZER DRAGOON SAGA LAST BRONX DARKLIGHT CONFLICT DISCWORLD 2 MARVEL SUPER HEROES SONIC JAM SKYTARGET

FIND DR. FRIES AND HIS ICE GUN TO WIN A HOLIDAY IN CALIFORNIA.



In the hot new film '**BATMAN AND ROBIN**', our intrepid heroes face the chilling **DR FRIES**, who is threatening to put a freeze on Gotham City. And you should be on the watch out for the ice cold villain too. If you find him in any of the packs shown you've won one of 15 fantastic trips to California, the home of the movies. Not that Dr Fries is the only mean hearted crook with a prize on his head. Find **POISON IVY** and you'll be rewarded with one of 3,000 **BATMAN AND ROBIN** soundtrack CD's or one of 10,000 videos of '**BATMAN**', '**BATMAN RETURNS**' AND '**BATMAN FOREVER**'.



AVAILABLE TO OWN ON VIDEO.



BATMAN & ROBIN

The Soundtrack, available on CD and cassette, includes REM, R. Kelly, Underworld, Bone Thugs 'n' Harmony and the hit single from The Smashing Pumpkins 'The end is the beginning is the end'.



NEXT MONTH
A STUNNING DEMO CD

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE continues its crusade to bring you the very best in cover disc entertainment... no crap, no "block-rocking beats" audio nonsense, just the very best in Saturn entertainment. Next month, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE continues the full-on demo activities with a range of games old and new, plus an exclusive chance to try out one of the most eagerly awaited Saturn games of the summer: the incredible Sonic Jam!
As well as this playable bounty of awesomeness, we also have a vast range of non-playable marvellous videogames, the full list of which you'll find on this page! This CD marks the beginning of a new wave of SSM demo discs and if you think what you see here is cool... well, what we have planned for the next few months WILL BLOW YOU AWAY!!









PLAYABLE DEMOS

SONIC JAM

The showcase demonstration of our next CD is Sonic Jam - the first Saturn game from the Sonic Team to feature Sega's megastar hedgehog! Why is this demo so cool? Well, not only do you get demos of two of the four Sonic games, you also get a full-on demo of the amazing 3D SonicWorld! Thrill to the greatest 3D graphics demo your Saturn has ever seen! Who needs Nintendo 64 when your trusty Saturn can produce stunning 3D graphics of this quality?

SONIC 3D

You can't beat a bit of Sonic, can you? To complement the demo of Sonic Jam, we have a return of the ace Sonic 3D demo. Get to patrol an entire act of this mega title (coded by the people behind the forthcoming Sonic R) and thrill to the stunning 3D Special Stage programmed by the Sonic Team themselves. Not bad eh?

SEGA RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

A special demo included for all the thousands of new Saturn owners who've taken advantage of the amazing £99 offer. This classic game gives you all the reasons you need to own the amazing Sega machine - quality software. Sega Rally: the demo gives you an entire track to race around in. It's stunning road racing at its best - that simple.

DIE HARD ARCADE

Well this one was on our last demo disc, but the powers-that-be have decided to include it as an added bonus in addition to the other playable and non-playable demos on this disc. You want the best Streets of Rage style game on the Saturn? You want super-smooth 3D and bone-crunching violence? Look no further than this particularly good demonstration!

NON-PLAYABLE DEMOS

The future of Saturn software is very bright indeed, and SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE intends to prove it with the release of the following games over the next few months. So, take a seat, put your feet up and take a look at the preview footage of these awesome videogames: coming to a demo disc near you next issue!

RESIDENT EVIL

The showcase on page 44 gives you all the reasons you need to buy this stunning conversion! Get to see the game in action on our demo disc next issue!

DRAGON FORCE

You want a hybrid role-playing/ strategy title that's been given huge amounts of awards and acclaim the world over? You want Dragon Force then!

WIPEOUT 2097

A brilliant racing game on PlayStation, you'll find that the Saturn version is just as good. And you get to see it in action on the next demo disc!

DUKE NUKEM 3D

Lobotomy Software's Duke Nukem 3D conversion shows that in the right hands, Saturn's 3D is up there with the best! You'll see how next month.

SEGA TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP

The acclaimed follow-up to Sega Rally is coming to the Saturn. Why settle for still screenshots when you get to see the Saturn version moving next issue?

ENEMY ZERO

A game that combines FMV adventuring with awesome real-time style Doom-ish action! Enemy Zero was a HUGE, HUGE hit in Japan and you'll see why when you see the demo!

Contents list correct at time of going to press. Contents may change in final CD.

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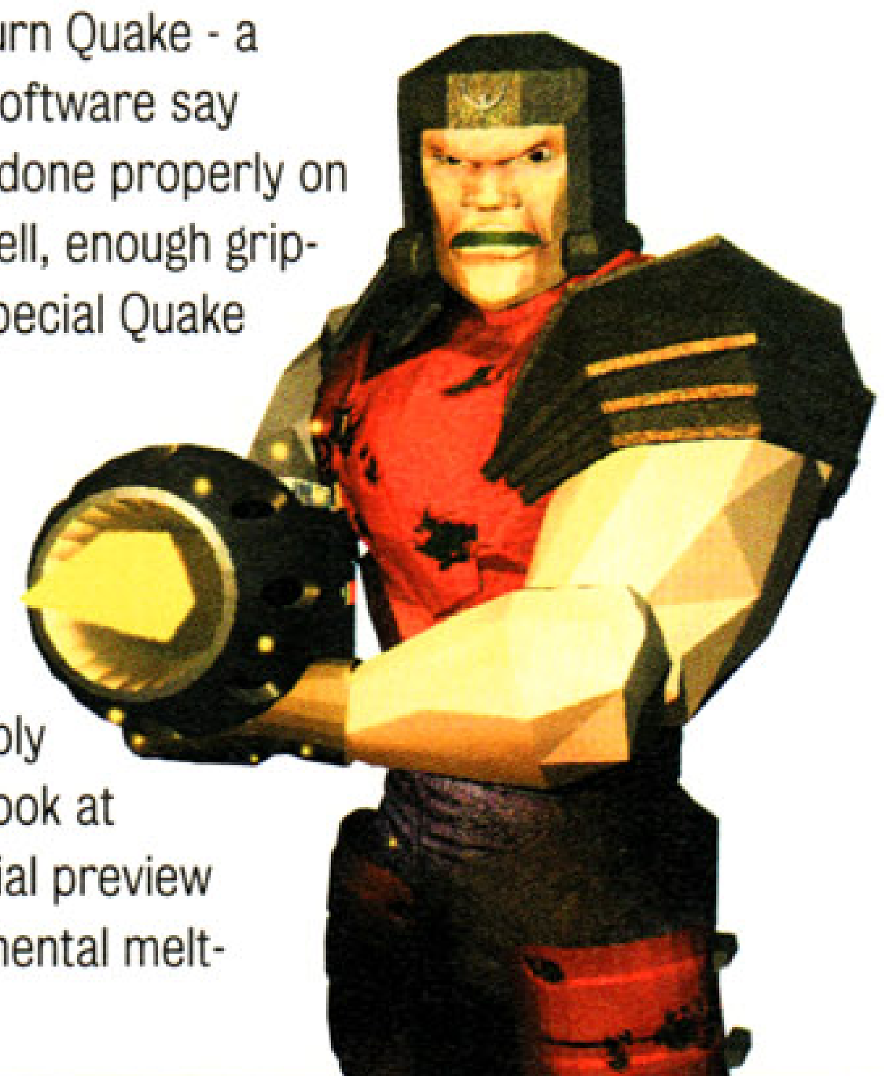
COVER STORY

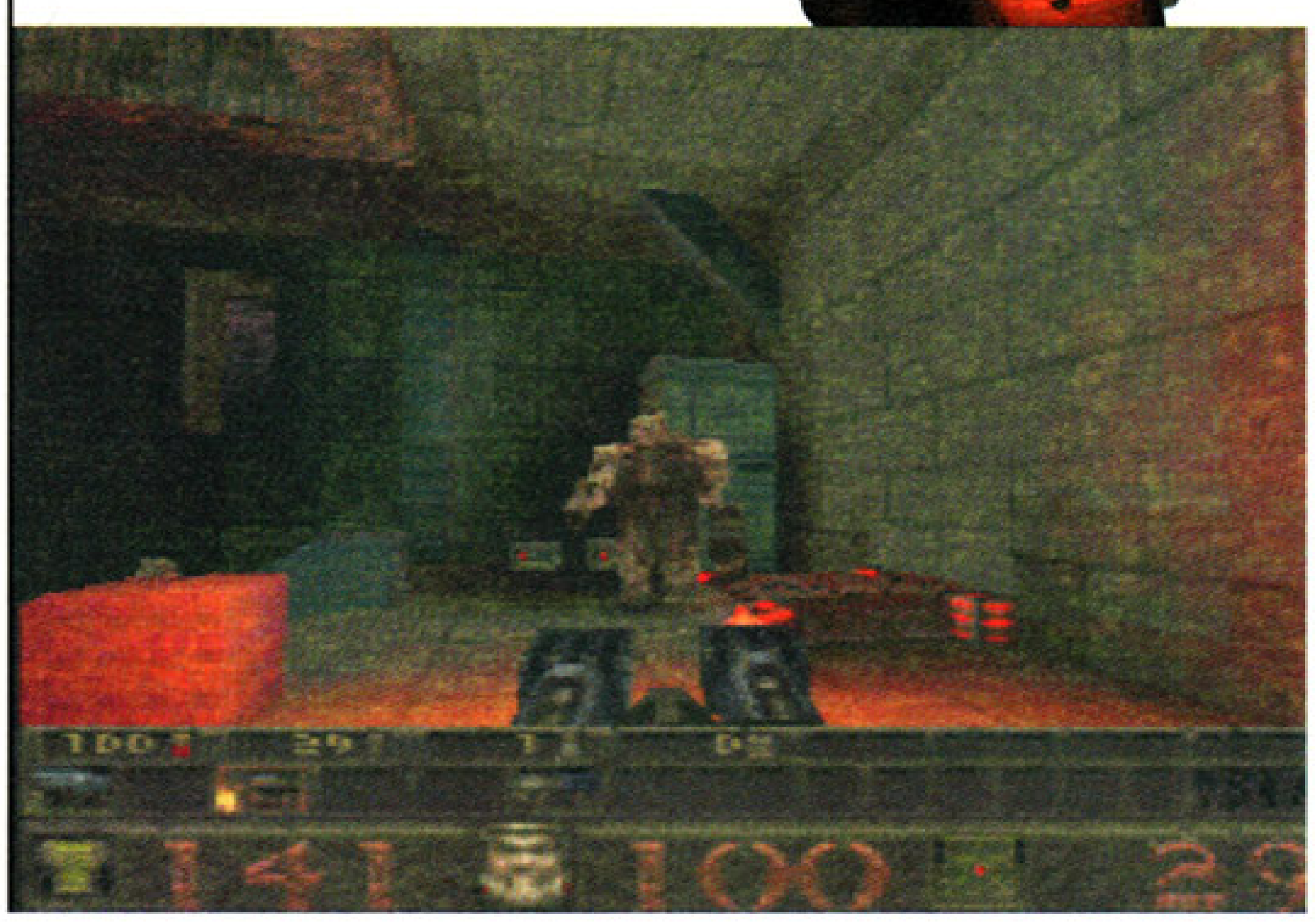
Sonic's back in a racing game that promises to have the best graphics in any racing game ever! You won't believe the visual effects in this stunning racer, and with Travellers Tales and Sonic Team collaborating on this one, prepare yourself for a classic!



SPECIAL PREVIEW

So... due to "technical difficulties" there isn't going to be any Tomb Raider 2... so how come the Saturn's performing 3D miracles with Saturn Quake - a game Lobotomy Software say couldn't really be done properly on PlayStation? Ah well, enough griping. Look at this special Quake preview and rest assured: the power of the Saturn is untouchable and this game will simply blow your mind! Look at our amazing special preview and prepare for mental meltdown! Ahahaha!





NEWS SPECIAL

The Electronics Entertainment Expo is one of the most important videogames shows in the world! We were there and we'll give you the best possible coverage in an all-new design for our news section!



SHOWCASES

A classic PlayStation title for sure, and guess what: it promises to be even better for the Sega Saturn. We've managed to obtain a 80% complete version of the game which has everything bar the Saturn-specific enhancements. Forget the pathetic, throwaway coverage found elsewhere. Read SSM and feel the power of this incredible game!

Aha! Yet another brilliant PlayStation game finds its way to the Saturn and guess what? It's as good a conversion as you could possibly hope for (well, almost). SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE takes apart this excellent title and tells you everything you need to know about Psygnosis' finest hour!

Aha! Yet another brilliant PlayStation game finds its way to the Saturn and guess what? It's as good a conversion as you could possibly hope for (well, almost). SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE takes apart this excellent title and tells you everything you need to know!

Development on AM3's graphically untouchable beat 'em up continues at a rapid pace and the game is now virtually identical to the original coin-op - secret boss character included! SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE takes a good long look at this contender. Get ready to be excited about this game!

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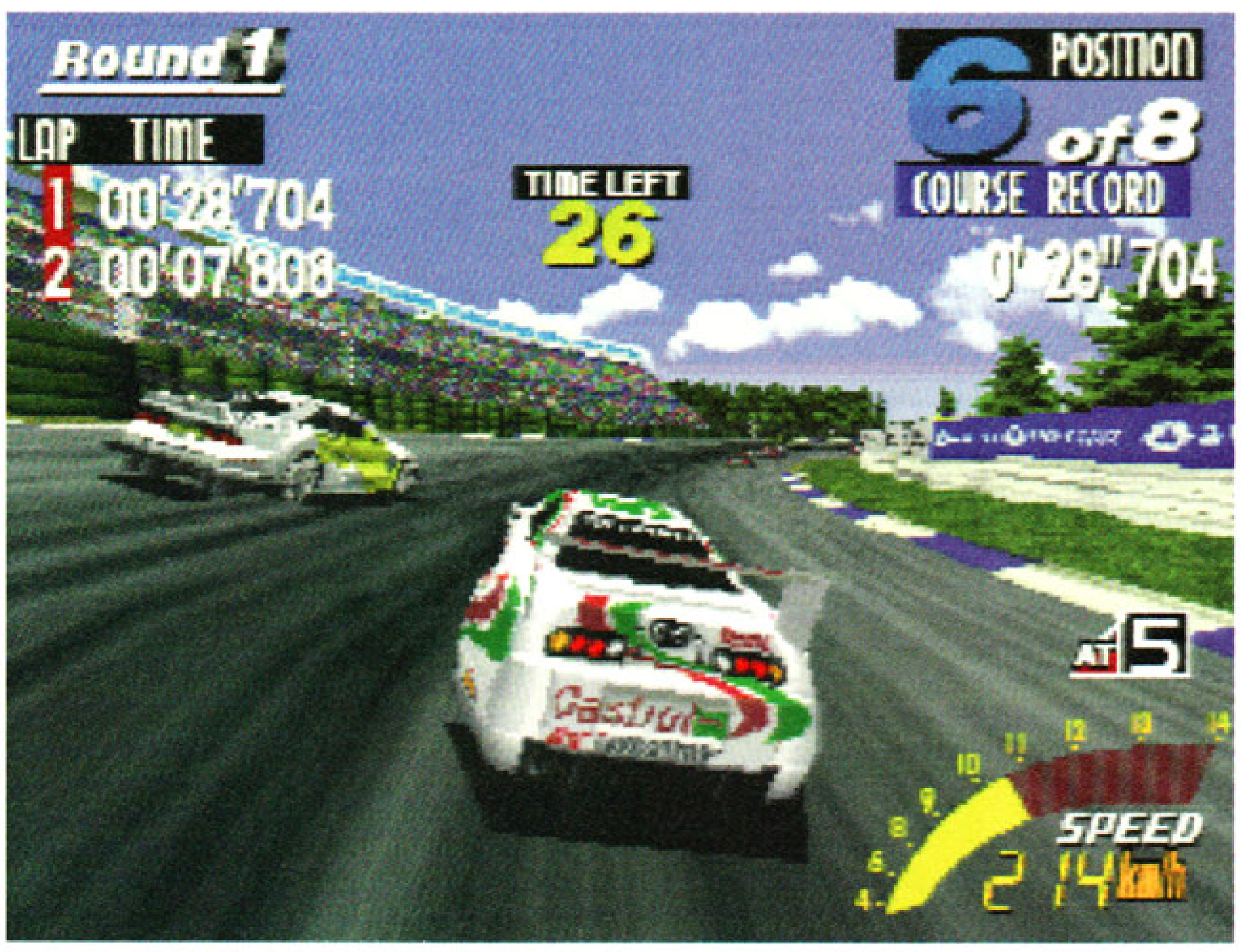
I'd like to think that we've done some pretty amazing issues of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE in the last few months... well, on paper at least, this issue is clearly the king of all publications indeed. All of the stunning games we've been hyping ourselves (and you) up about have finally arrived either complete or near-finished. And they're all AWESOME! Resident Evil is just stunning, Quake continues to boggle my mind, WipEout 2097 is great and Sonic Jam is brilliant! The E3 show is covered in depth this issue, and the quality over quantity approach has clearly paid off: there are some seriously cosmic Saturn titles coming soon (Marvel Super Heroes is breathtaking). As you can tell, I'm very excited about the Sega scene at the moment. I hope this enthusiasm finds its way into this month's issue!
Excelsior!
Rich Leadbetter,
Editor.



AM Annex MegaGame

Touring Car
Exclusive first shots!

40% Complete demo debuts at E3 ■ Virtual On Conversion Squad on the case ■ All three tracks and four cars already in the Saturn game ■ AM Annex fully involved in the conversion work



With AM Annex and the Virtual On team on the job, this is bound to be a major league title.



The graphics already look superb.



The four cars have made to the Saturn already!





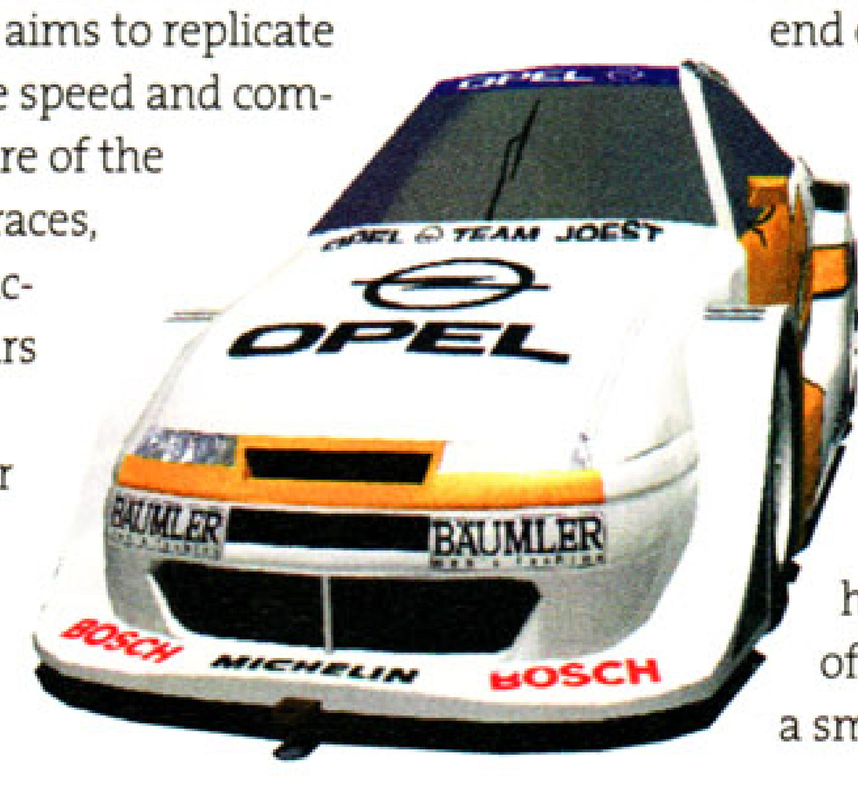


More Saturn Touring Car!

THIS YEAR'S E3 SHOW REVEALED THE first early demo of Sega Touring Car Championship: the conversion of the racing game that everyone's talking about (well they would be if they had any sense).

Sega Touring Car Championship comes from the same master developer who produced the unforgettable Sega Rally and Manx TT SuperBike, AM Annex - a breakaway AM division who previously formed part of AM3.

The game aims to replicate the immense speed and competitive nature of the Touring Car races, where production motorcars are put through their paces on the world's foremost racing circuits. And it succeeds perfectly! Touring Car is a brilliant game, combining the precision driving of Sega Rally with fierce car battling on a grand scale.



With the Virtual On CS Team having been on the job for a couple of months now, it's amazing to see how much they have achieved in the 40% conversion version of the game we saw at the E3 exhibition. The three tracks and four cars were all present and inroads had been made into reproducing the front-end of the game too.

The gameplay appears to be present and correct, with fans of the oversteer elements of Rally well catered for. The enemy cars are in too - not bad for a 40% complete game. The additional 60% will hopefully come in the form of slightly tidier graphics and a smooth frame rate (two

problems encountered with this early code) as well as an array of new game modes, which are apparently being devised by Tetsuya Mizuguchi and the AM Annex posse. The original arcade team are also overseeing the conversion work, making sure that the final game will be every bit as good as - and hopefully even better than - the epoch-making Sega Rally, which remains the definitive Saturn road racer.

Obviously, we're quite worked up about this one, so expect us to continue the coverage in the very next edition of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE! In the meantime, enjoy these exclusive screenshots!





E3 Masterpiece

Dragoon Returns!

Stunning adventure will blow your mind



The E3 demo concentrated exclusively on combat, which adopts a more RPG style system, although the graphics are still incredible.

IF YOU THOUGHT PANZER DRAGOON Zwei was unbelievable, ready yourself for the senses-shattering Panzer Dragoon Saga.

Saturn owners are kind of liberated guys: after all, we've seen that RPGs can be pretty cool (just check out Dark Savior, Shining The Holy Ark or the forthcoming Grandia), but the genre is set to rise to a new level of excellence in the form of Team Andromeda's Panzer adventure.

Words alone cannot describe the sheer excellence that is Panzer Dragoon Saga. The graphics are amazing - just as smooth as Panzer Zwei, but with tons more detail (particularly in the town sections). All of things usually associated with quality PlayStation produce (loads of polygons, all light sourced) can be found here, along with the kind of special effects that only Andromeda can program, resulting in a videogame that looks like being the best-looking RPG in existence!

The game is split into several sections - the town sections are where most of the character interaction takes place, as well as the vast majority of object interaction. Once your dragon is located, the field sections take place. These are overhead sections, allowing to move between areas (there's a bit of shooting here too!).

Combat is similar in terms of look to previous Panzer epics, although being an RPG, it's turns based as opposed to all-out action. The visual effects remain amazing though!

Panzer RPG is due to be released in Japan in September, but probably won't make it here until 1998. This is due to the sheer size of the game. According to Sega, over 1,500 pages of Japanese text require translation to English before the game can be released.... so we could be in for quite a wait. You can expect full updates in forthcoming issues.



Combat is initiated in a similar style to the Shining games. Exploration of each area (as seen to the right) is interspersed by sudden meanie attacjs (as seen in every other picture).





Exploration is still important in Panzer RPG.



Rack in those experience points!

New Games Update

Hot Saturn Titles Near completion



E3 demos amazing conversions ■ Capcom's Marvel Super Heroes and Street Fighter Collection are amazing ■ Quake and Duke Nukem stun everyone!

YOU'VE READ ABOUT ALL OF THE games featured on these pages elsewhere in this issue, or in previous editions of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE. Well, E3 was the place to see the very latest versions of these stunning titles, and our lovely editor is on hand to give you the very latest on videogames that you MUST have in your collection! All of these games are just utterly amazing and get the SSM seal of approval!

Marvel Super Heroes



Marvel Super Heroes was one of the best games at E3: amazing coverage next issue!

THIS IS THE 2D FIGHTING GAME THAT the world and its associated relatives are waiting for with bated breath. The version we based our Coming Soon last month raised as many questions as it answered: yes, the graphics were amazing, but the speed was abysmal. Also, the "pre-alpha" version was RAM cart only, would the same be true of the final code?

Well, the version we played at E3 was just about finished and it was stunning. Awesome. Unbelievable. And it played without the RAM cart, so this game will definitely get a UK release as Virgin have promised!

The speed issues we were concerned about have mostly been rectified - even when performing the benchmark test (an epic Juggernaut versus Hulk confrontation), the game kept up an awesome velocity. Excellent stuff.

The version we played was just off completion, and Capcom had removed a few characters but there was no denying that Marvel Super Heroes is class act. Expect enormous coverage next issue!

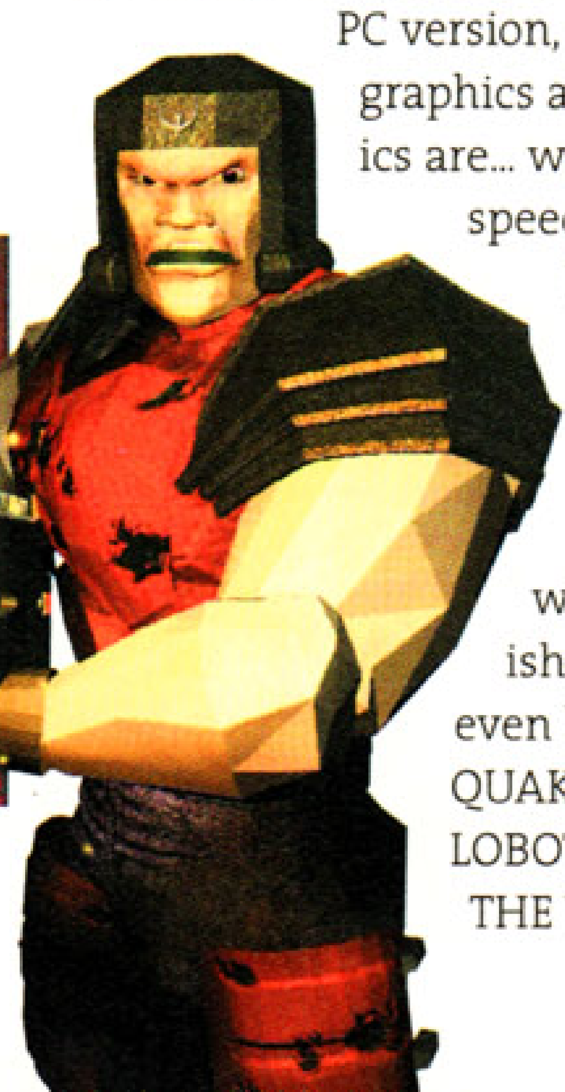
Quake

QUAKE IS AMAZING. NO, IT'S MORE than amazing, it's a revelation! The E3 demo was three levels of mind-blowing videogaming, the like of which the Saturn has never seen before. In the preview this issue we mentioned that some of the lighting effects had been removed to keep the speed up: well, they're back and looking awesome! More monsters are in, the gameplay is nigh-on identical to the PC version, and the graphics are... the graphics are... well, we're speechless.

Lobotomy have more than delivered on their promises and when it's finished, we expect even better things. QUAKE RULES! LOBOTOMY RULE THE WORLD!



Lobotomy's Quake work takes Saturn's technical achievements to the next level!



Sonic Jam

A BIG DEAL WAS MADE OF THIS product at the E3 and rightly so. Now totally complete and available in Japan, this is very definitely the best retro pack available on the Saturn (edging out the admittedly brilliant Bubble Bobble pack through the sheer volume of Sonic-related goodies you get on the disc). Combined with the early demo of Sonic R featured at the show (see page 18 for the full story), it was clear that the blue spikey one is back... in a BIG way! It now looks as though the UK version of Sonic Jam will appear at the end of August. So look out for that!



Duke Nukem 3D

LOBOTOMY'S DUKE CONVERSION WAS always going to be the one to watch out for and E3 delegates were astounded to see a conversion that's not only tons smoother than the PlayStation version, but better-looking than the N64 game! It's going to be the smoothness of Duke that will impress you: this game has no right to be running this fast with graphics of this calibre! Duke Nukem is nigh-on complete now and hopefully, we'll have the first report in the next issue of SATURN MAGAZINE. You will be stunned! In the meantime, enjoy this risque little picture that shows that Lobotomy have kept in all of Duke's naughty bits.



Duke 3D is just a little bit on the rude side.

Street Fighter Collection

WE FIRST MENTIONED THIS IN A news story about five months ago and finally it's complete! The Street Fighter 2 Collection is a 2D "value" collection featuring THREE complete arcade conversions! Forming the centrepiece of the collection are Super Street Fighter 2 and Super Street Fighter 2 Turbo, which featured new moves for each character and faster speed (hence the "Turbo"). Additionally, the pack also includes Street Fighter Alpha 2 Gold, a Japanese coin-op upgrade to Street Fighter Alpha 2. Now, a lot of the enhancements actually made it into the Saturn rendition of Alpha 2 (Evil Ryu and the like), but SFA2G also features the return of the Dramatic Battle, allowing two players to fight any CPU controlled opponent.

Oh... and there's a hidden coin-op conversion in there too!

New Games

Get the Fox out of here!

Fox Interactive continue and confirm their Saturn support ■ Alien Versus Predator deep in development as we speak ■ Argonaut's Super Mario 64 clone - Croc - shown on Saturn at the E3

FOX INTERACTIVE ARE SLOWLY BUILDing up a presence in the videogames arena, with their showing at E3 combining some mega-popular licenses along with intriguing original produce.

We'll get the licenses out of the way first: for Saturn owners, this basically boils down to Alien versus Predator. This game originally started out life as a Doom clone on the doomed Atari Jaguar. Now original developers Rebellion are intent on resurrecting it for the true next generation machines; PC, PlayStation and Saturn. Curiously enough, what was shown at E3 was most reminiscent of the Jaguar original, albeit with whacking great bells and whistles attached to it.

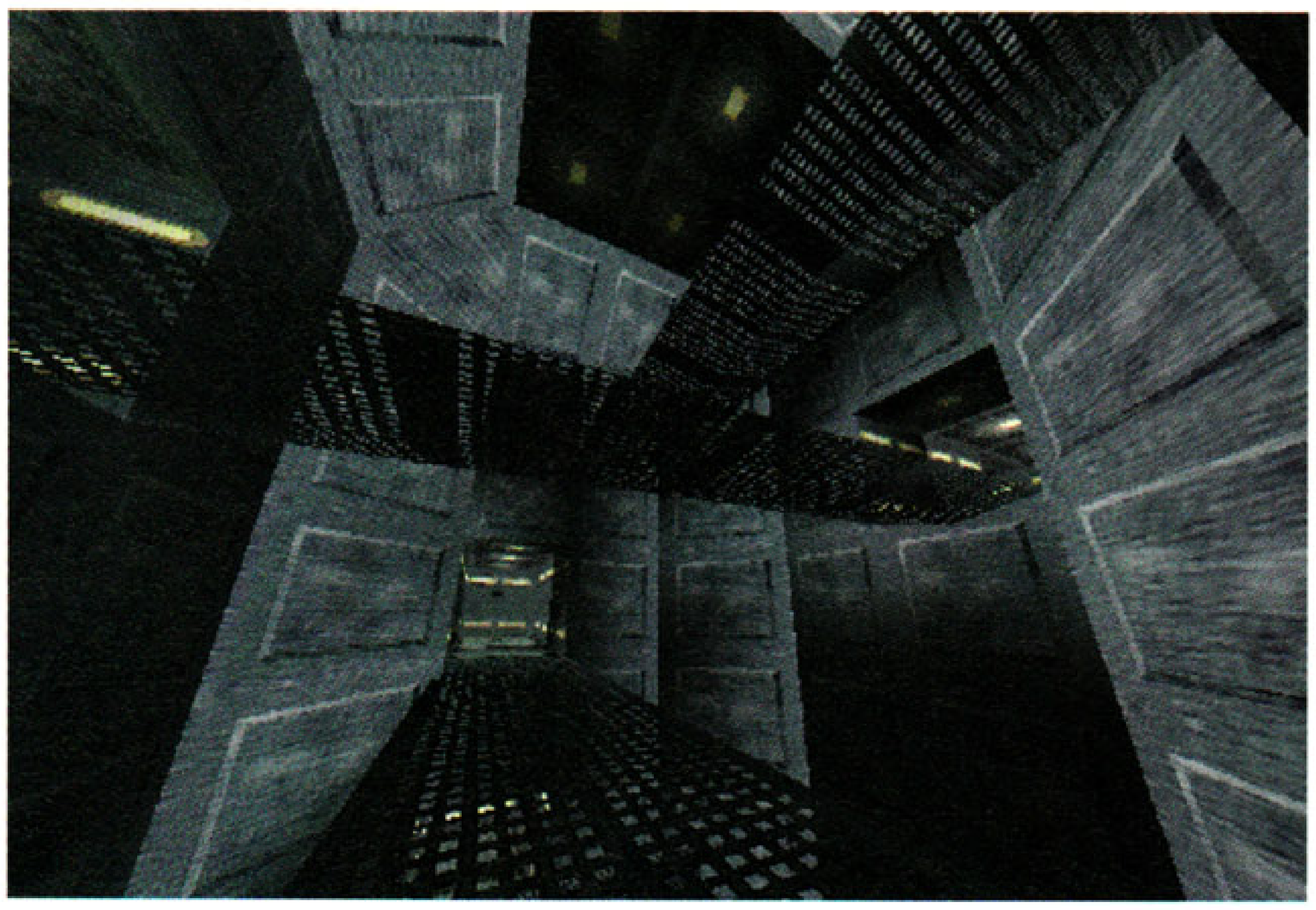
Just as in the original Jag game, the player gets to control a Colonial Marine, the Predator and (you guessed it) an Alien, each of which provides a different challenge in the game environment.

We won't goad you with any more details, because of the plain and simple fact that there was absolutely nothing to see on the Saturn version at the E3. Still, since Croc made an appearance on the Sega machine, we should have a bit more faith in Fox over and above other developers who promised much but delivered nothing at E3.

Still, here are some Alien versus Predator screenshots to look at somewhere on the page.. Since work is at a very early stage, we've had to stick to PC shots for the time being, but we're assured that the Saturn version should be similar to what is pictured here. We'll keep you up to date.

Two definite titles announced

Two Game Shock



It will be interesting to see if coders Rebellion make Saturn Alien vs Predator look this good.



More PC Alien vs Predator action.



Croc is a Saturn title to look out for. Oh yes.



AT THIS YEAR'S E3, SHOULD YOU HAVE strayed far from the Sega or Capcom booths, you would have been hard-pressed to find any Saturn games on display whatsoever. However, Fox Interactive did have a solitary Sega title gracing their booth with its presence and that game was Argonaut's Croc. Argonaut are one of the celebrated British software houses, responsible for incredible software in the hey-day of the 16-bit computers and consoles, including Starglider and its sequel on Amiga and StarFox (StarWing) on the Super NES. Their profile looks set to rise again with the release of this new platform adventure which unashamedly brings aspects from the 64-bit Mario game onto the 32-bit systems.

The first thing to strike you about Croc is the quality of the backgrounds and the environment in general: it truly is like a subset of Mario 64. It runs at much the same speed, although obviously N64 special effects and detail aren't quite as impressive on the Saturn.

The character itself (the eponymous Croc) seems a bit lame to be honest, but he controls well enough and already Argonaut have included support for Sega's NiGHTS analogue pad (yet another reason to make sure that you own this essential peripheral). Most importantly though, Croc takes the Saturn into a genre in which you'll be hard pressed to find many quality titles.

Croc is the first full freedom 3D platform game to arrive on the Saturn and although early in development, it looks most promising. It would be most excellent if Argonaut were spurred on by the SonicWorld section in Sonic Jam. Yes, Croc looks cool, but Sonic Team's mastery of the Saturn hardware has resulted in a far more impressive frame rate and detail level. Digressions aside, it's good to see at least one company outside of Capcom and Sega happy to display their Saturn wares. We'll have more on Croc in the next issue.

Opinion

Saturn At E3: Quality over Quantity

THIS WAS THE E3 THAT WAS BILLED AS being the showcase for software, with no new machines or consoles being revealed but ironically, it was a piece of hardware that was the star of E3.

Sega's line-up was undeniably impressive. However, despite a massive stand, SoA's presentation was definitely lacking compared to the enormous screens and laser-lights seen in the Nintendo and Sony "booths". It was definitely a case of the quality games saving the day for the Saturn, with Lobotomy's biggies Duke Nukem 3D and Quake stealing the showcase. Ah yes, Quake. You might have heard that the PlayStation version has been canned. Well, even Lobotomy themselves admitted to me that a PS Quake would be extremely problematic (even for them!). Sonic R and Touring Car were cool, Panzer RPG was mind-blowing, and I was very surprised by the quality sports titles, but I was equally taken aback at just how few games were new to me in my capacity as battle-weary games journo.

From an overall perspective, Sega fared well. Sony's massive presence was negated by some very average and very samey looking software - their biggie, Blasto, was to be frank, poor. Sega had quality. Sony had quantity. As for Nintendo... well, all the games I wanted to play (Zelda, Yoshi's Island, F-Zero) were video-only presentations and the new titles available: Banjo-Kazooie and Conker's Quest were virtually interchangeable games, both obviously "inspired" by Mario 64. So neither quantity, nor originality there.

The hardware star I referred to earlier was the 3DFX technology. Every major PC title used this amazing 3D board to produce stunning visuals: Quake 2 in particular was outstanding. And this is good news for Sega as they have also optioned the hardware for use in their next games machine.

Third party support was extremely lacking for Saturn this E3 (especially compared to PlayStation) but should the developer-friendly 3DFX make it into the next Sega machine we're guaranteed huge support plus ports of PC titles that will, quite simply, move Sega head, shoulders and indeed torso over the opposition. Will this vision come to pass? I'll let you know next year.

Rich Leadbetter has visited four CESes and three E3s. So he knows a lot about these kind of things.

"Sega's E3 line-up surprised its sceptics, despite lacklustre presentation"

News in Brief

FIRST THE BAD NEWS

While E3 saw a number of Saturn exclusives announced, a couple of titles have unfortunately been cancelled altogether. First up is Psygnosis' Formula 1, a much anticipated conversion of the PlayStation hit and one that would have undoubtedly been a massive success. Likewise, Electronic Arts have decided not to develop a Saturn version of Nuclear Strike, instead opting to concentrate on their range of quality sports titles. And finally, to answer the many calls we've received from irate readers, Codemasters have confirmed that Jonah Lomu Rugby has slipped from its original June release date and will now hit the shelves in September just in time for the new rugger season. Micro Machines V3 is still coming though, honest!

MONSTER IN YOUR POCKET

Sticking with Capcom for just a moment, the legendary Street Fighter developer recently announced the imminent arcade release of Pocket Fighters. The game features the same super deformed Street Fighter and DarkStalkers characters that appeared in Puzzle Fighter but this time they're slugging it out in a hyper cute 2D beat 'em up. Players can look forward to miniaturised versions of Ryu and company performing all manner of scaled down special moves with powerful attacks releasing Puzzle Fighter gems onto the screen.

SHINY CLARIFICATION

Shiny Entertainment's Dave Perry was quick to point out on the Internet that his forthcoming title, Wild 9, has not been canned on the Saturn. Oh no, although development has ceased and will not continue until he is satisfied that Sega of America are making inroads into making the Saturn more of a commercially viable platform. You'd think seven million users the world over would be viable enough...

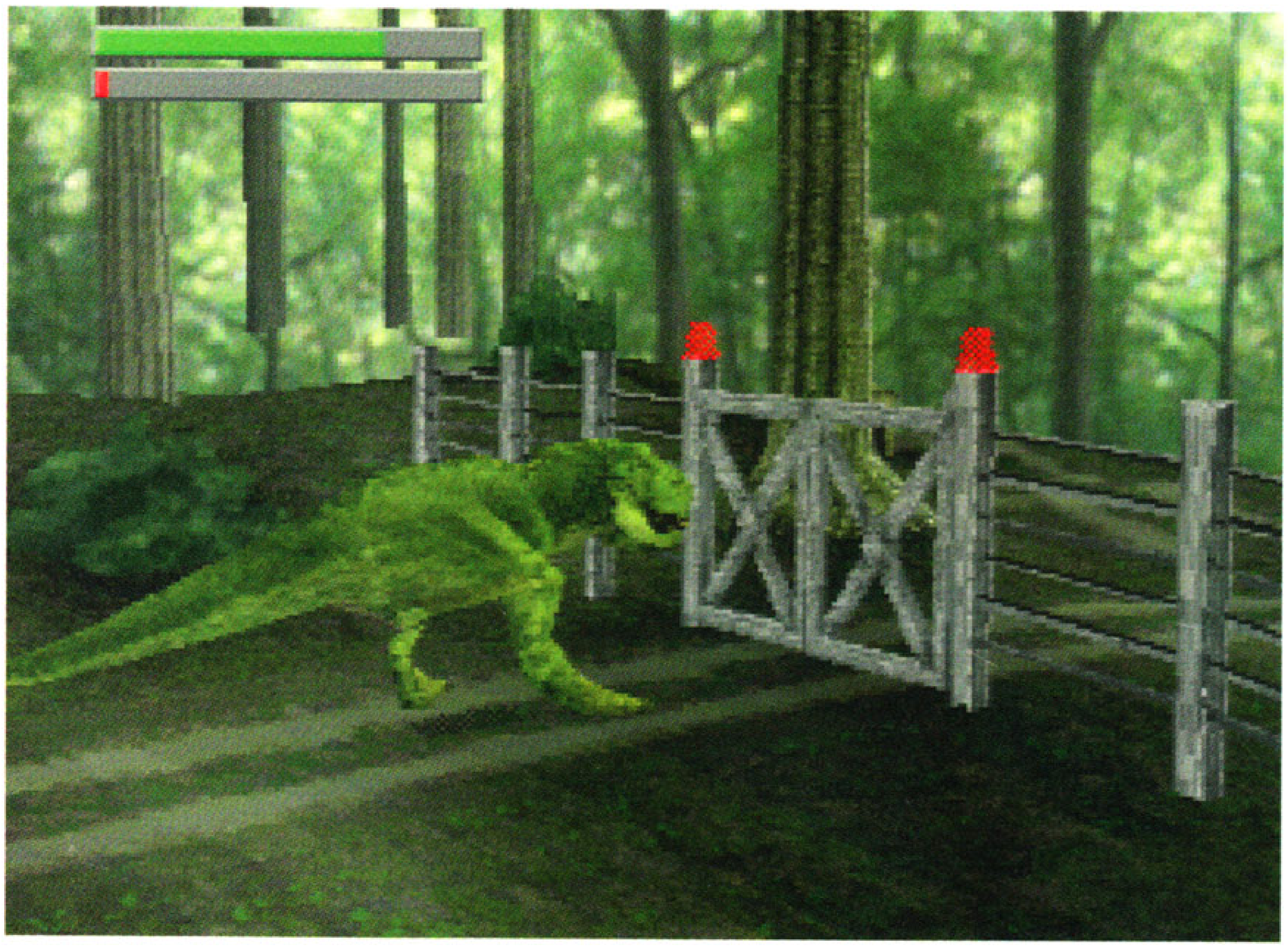
VIRTUA FIGHTER 3 UPGRADE CANNED?

The Internet is a funny place. According to a "major" site on the web, Sega of America have officially announced that their will be no Virtua Fighter 3 upgrade cartridge for the Saturn. The official line from Sega of Japan is quite different, remaining (as it always has been), "No comment". Try as we might to get some kind of definitive answer from Sega Europe, that was also the best they could offer. So the situation remains: no-one knows anything until Yu Suzuki of AM2 decides to tell someone. We expect a major Japanese press conference later this year.

Major Licence Alert!

Prepare to Enter... The Lost World!

Record-breaking movie comes to the Saturn ■ Super-smooth 3D polygon visuals ■ Awesome rendered visuals identical to PlayStation version ■ Soundtrack better than the movie!







The Compy comes a cropper from Croc capering.

OKAY: MINI-REVIEW TIME. OUR esteemed Editor has had not one, but TWO preview screenings of The Lost World: Jurassic Park 2. The verdict? Great effects, awesome dino action, very little plot, a super-crap ending and the usual sickening Spielberg "kids can be heroes too" interlude where a little sprog takes out a 'Raptor with gymnastics. Arghhh! Noooooo!

Still, there's little doubt that this movie will break UK records when it comes out and it is pretty entertaining, so there's bound to be a great deal of interest in The Lost World on Saturn, which as we exclusively revealed two issues ago, takes the form of a 2.5D Pandemonium style romp.

The essential gameplay elements seem pretty cool: the game features 20 levels with 40 different stages, and features five different "characters" to play as: a Compy, 'Raptor, T-Rex, Human Scientist or Human Hunter.

Another cool element of The Lost World comes in the form of the texture-mapping. Rather than having specific textures applied to polygons, the game gives each character a "skin" which stretches around the 3D shape as it moves about.

The game's certainly shaping up to be a bit of all right, matching the PlayStation version point for point. In particular, look out for the awesome soundtrack, which easily eclipses the movie's disappointing accompaniment (John Williams? Surely not!).

This game's looking cool and we'll update you next issue.



The T-Rex is fully player-controllable and features some amazing animation!



Pandemonium-style Compy action shown here.



Platform 'Raptor tomfoolery depicted above.

New Coin-op

Jurassic Park Discovered in Arcade







CONTINUING THE JURASSIC MADNESS, Sega's arcade division AM3 have just about completed work on an arcade rendition of The Lost World, which uses the incredible Model 3 technology (this is the first non-AM2 title to use the board).

What you get for your money is the best dinosaurs ever seen outside of the cinema, along with the classic Sega arcade gun-slinging gameplay. One or two players are cast as scientists (according to the press release, but our money's on the hunters) who travel through the eponymous Lost World, blowing the hell out of dinos left, right and indeed centre in the classic Virtua Cop stylee!

It's a great way to spend 50p and the graphics are to die for, but what is very curious is that considering the high body count in the dinosaur department, the game couldn't be further from the film, where NOT ONE Jurassic critter bites the dust in any way, shape or form!

Still, we very much doubt that this is going to dent the popularity of this "monster" arcade game, which should be available in the next few weeks. Hopefully we'll have more next month.



E3 Analysis

How did the Saturn Fare in the Greatest Video games show on Earth?



SEGA INCLUDED, THIS PAST E3 WAS full of no surprises. Technical excellence, in some cases, yes. Ingenuity of gameplay, hardly at all. In the first bracket, Sega's Saturn is due a great conversion of id's Quake. Related to that, but far and away more promising, is id's Quake 2 published by Activision. While everybody is doing their utmost to make the best of the original Quake engine, applying it to all manner of themes, id have taken the engine several steps beyond, adding real physics, insane detail and enemies with multiple attack possibilities. Definitely worthy of the big crowd surrounding those particular monitors. Games which weren't receiving as much attention as the publishers may have liked included Nintendo's Banjo-Kazooie and Conker's Quest. Think Mario 64, and replace the main character with a) a honey bear, or b) a squirrel. Not happy. In contrast, Rare's GoldenEye stood out as one of the most original at the entire show. My one and only adrenalin rush of the show came from Konami's Metal Gear Solid, running on PlayStation. Technically and gameplay-wise Metal Gear gives an outstanding performance (*Konami have stated they will bring this to Saturn if there's enough demand - Rich*). All things considered, E3 1997 didn't produce anything outstanding. Unlike last year's event where Mario 64 caused legs to buckle, and visitors were awed by NiGHTS. If anything, the one presence which couldn't fail to be missed was 3DFX. It seemed that every publisher wanted to show off their PC software with this accelerator. Good news for Sega who as you know own the console rights to the technology..

Paul Davies is Editor of CVG and possessed by the "Spirit of the Mad Gamer". Most of the time..

> **"If anything, the once presence which could not fail to be missed was 3DFX..."**

Complete E3 Games Guide

A veritable onslaught of third party games came to light at E3... but only a very small proportion were actually shown, mostly on the Capcom stand, actually (oh and Fox showed Saturn Croc). Still, here's the list as announced – just don't expect all of them to emerge from development or indeed to be released in the UK.

ACCLAIM
NHL Breakaway '98
Magic: The Gathering – BattleMage

ACTIVISION
Hexen II

ASC GAMES
Colliderz
Ten Pin Alley

CAPCOM
Marvel Super Heroes
Megaman X4
Resident Evil
Dungeons & Dragons Collection
Super Street Fighter II Collection
X-Men vs Street Fighter
Vampire Savior

ELECTRONIC ARTS
FIFA '98: The Road to the World Cup
Warcraft II: The Dark Saga
NHL '98
Madden NFL '98
NBA Live '98
NASCAR '98

FOX INTERACTIVE
Croc: The Legend of the Gobbos
Aliens vs Predator

INTERPLAY
VR Baseball '97

LUCASARTS
Herc's Adventures

MALOFILM INTERACTIVE
Jersey Devil

MIDWAY
Mortal Kombat Trilogy
Maximum Force
Arcade's Greatest Hits, The Atari Collection I

TECMO
Dead or Alive
Stackers

VIRGIN
Grand Slam '97

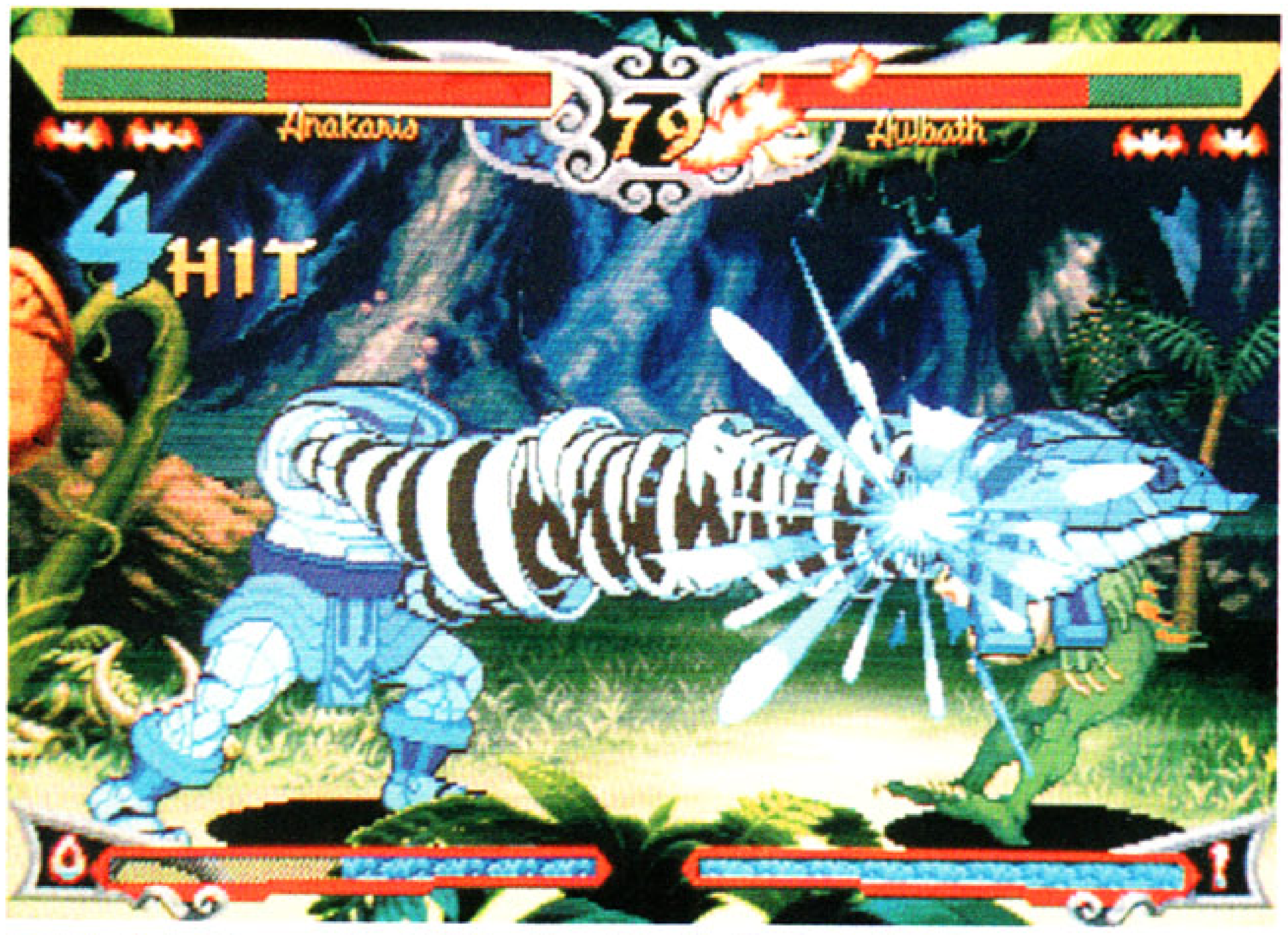
WORKING DESIGNS
Magic Knight: Rayearth
Lunar: Silver Star Story

E3 Announcement

Vampire Savior

EXCLUSIVE!

Capcom's Creature Feature comes home ■ Four new backgrounds ■ Incredible new Dark Force custom combo techniques ■ Yes! It's exclusive to Saturn - no other home versions planned at all



Only the Sega Saturn can handle 2D loveliness like this. PlayStation? N64? Nope!



Vampire Savior has new custom combos.

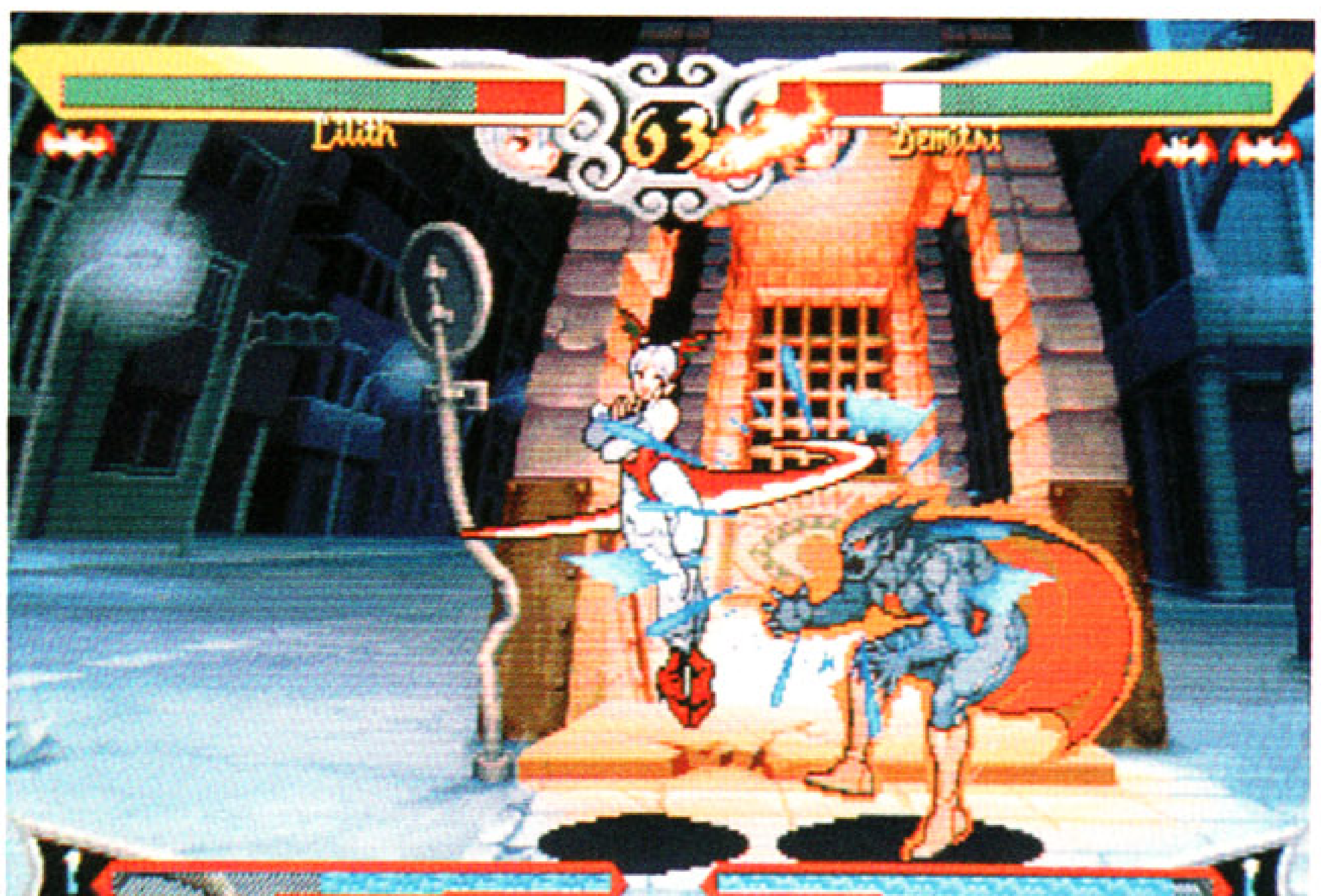

Check out this awesome new attack!



Whilst other companies desert the Saturn, Capcom still supply the exclusives!



The lovely graphics of NightWarriors look even better in the ace Vampire Savior!



It has to be said that of all the third party developers at the E3, the only company that really made any effort with their games was Capcom. Resident Evil we all know about, but Marvel Super Heroes was just awesome. And X-Men vs Street Fighter and Vampire Savior are on the way!

SATURN OWNERS REJOICE! CAPCOM, the king of all things beat 'em up related, announced yet another awesome Saturn arcade conversion at E3, the marvellous monster mash that is DarkStalkers 3: Vampire Savior. Scheduled for a home release in the first half of 1998, this coin-op hit is the second DarkStalkers sequel and the latest arcade game to utilise Capcom's trusty CP-System II board. The good news for you lucky folks is that Vampire Savior is a Saturn EXCLUSIVE, with the PlayStation's poor 2D record meaning only Sega's 32-bit machine can truly do this supernatural spectacular justice (remember it couldn't even do DarkStalkers 1 properly). Eleven weird warriors have made the leap from Vampire Hunter to the sequel, although the demon hunter Donovan and bosses Huitzil and Pyron have been dropped completely. However, to expand this already impressive line-up, Capcom have added four new characters in the form of Q-Bee, a bizarre half woman/half bee creature, Baby Bonnie Hood, a cute Little Red Riding Hood-like girl who packs an arsenal in her basket, Lilith, Morrigan's succubus sister, and Jedah, the Master of Darkness whose dark minions want you for the underworld. Vampire Savior features Capcom's impressive trademark animation style with all characters boasting some stunning and hilarious special moves.



Contrary to earlier reports, the game also features new, hand drawn backgrounds which are absolutely packed with detailed animations.

On the gameplay front, players can expect new moves for all existing fighters, including Demitri's Midnight Bliss blood-sucking attack, Victor's dashing Giga-Headbutt, Bishamon's Rock Drop and Hsien Ko's Bomb Toss, as well as the debut of Dark Force custom combos. When executed, this new combat system transports fighters to another dimension, allowing all manner of special moves and hits to be strung together. With the DarkStalkers series being a massive hit in Japan and a proven success on Saturn, Vampire Savior looks set to be a worthy addition to Capcom's extensive library of 2D beat 'em ups. More news and screenshots as we get 'em. In the mean time, enjoy this arcade action and rest assured that the Saturn version will look nigh-on identical!

As Capcom are now officially SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE's third party developer of choice, look out for a cool feature coming soon!

News Analysis

Five Star Games Policy:
Cracking down on crap software

SEGA CHOSE THE ATLANTA E3 TO unveil its new software policy, which aims to eradicate all poor software from Saturn and future hardware launches. The basic aim of it is pretty straightforward: in Sega's R&D labs, all titles are marked out of 20 on criteria such as graphics, sound, originality, ease-of-use and gameplay. If a title fails to reach a score of 90 or higher, the developers are told to improve it or can it. Games are reviewed on a monthly basis by Sega of America testers, producers and marketing staff.

Titles said to have passed the test so far include Fighters MegaMix, The Lost World, Manx TT, Last Bronx and Panzer Dragoon Saga. And yes, they are all great games.

Sega are said to be adhering this standard to third party developers too - in the States at least (European Fair Trade rulings prohibit Sega Europe from doing this), and if this means less crap like Battlestations, Dragonheart and The Crow: City of Angels, that's great news.

But will it really work? Take Independence Day - no way is this a Five Star game. Would Sega really have the balls to take on Fox Interactive (backed by EA in this country) and tell them that it isn't good enough to be released? Hmmm. Don't know about that. Sega also need to tell us what DOESN'T make the grade too so we can judge just how high these standards are. Would a ho-hum title like SkyTarget score over 90? Apparently so, it's coming out in the States in September.

As for this policy being adopted by Sega Europe... well, to be frank, they've been running a very similar scheme on Sega-branded software for years, carefully vetting games based on quality, not just commercial viability. True, there have been instances where internal politics have dictated that a particularly poor game does get a release, but their efforts, combined with the reviews of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE should keep you well clear of these gaming nuclear disasters.

So... Five Star Quality. Will it really change things that much? We'll just have to wait and see, won't we?



Fighters MegaMix: like all AM2 titles this is sheer class, deserving of the Five-Star Quality award!



SkyTarget's got a September release in the US: did it really pass the Five Star test?

Personality Profile #1

One of the Damned

NAME Rich Leadbetter

CURRENT ALIASES The Master, Official Shining the Holy Ark Tips Line

POSITION Editor, Super Villain

JOB DESCRIPTION Creates strategies to make SSM ever greater, writes a lot, plays games, tells everyone what to do. However, this is all a big cover to disguise his mad schemes for world domination.

SPECIAL SKILLS Inventive genius. Special sixth sense warns him when someone he doesn't like is approaching (see dislikes)

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS Helping launch original Mean Machines. Editing Mean Machines Sega when it sold 130,000+, Winning "Best Practical Features" at EMAP Consumer Mag awards 1992, Nominated "Editor of the Year" at same awards in 1994. Bringing SSM circulation up from 22,000 to way, way beyond the mag's current ABC figure of 30,000.

LIKES Multi-player Quake on PC, making Tom Guise of CVG squeal in defeat when playing him on aforementioned game. Or Fighters MegaMix. Or any other game you care to mention.

DISLIKES People with irritating voices, people who phone me up for no specific reason, time-wasters in general.

MAGS READ CVG, PC Zone, Private Eye, Spider-Man comics, JLA, Astro City.

ALL-TIME FAVOURITE GAMES Quake, Marvel Super Heroes, Exhumed, Virtua Fighter 2, Fighters MegaMix, Doom 2, Street Fighter Alpha 2.

Third Party Casualty?

Acclaim Back Away From Sega

JUDGING BY THE SEVERE DROP IN projected Saturn titles from Acclaim, it would appear that the financially troubled giant is taking a step back from its Saturn development and concentrating more on PC.

According to the third party release schedule which issued forth from Sega themselves (and they admit that some of the titles therein will be canned), Acclaim will only release two more titles for the Saturn this year. And none of them were on display at the E3. This basically means that the company's big titles such as Fantastic Four, Batman and Robin and Turok: Dinosaur Hunter won't make it to the Sega Saturn.

Instead we are to receive a conversion of Magic the Gathering: BattleMage, which morphs the best card game in the world ever into a kind of Command and Conquer style strategy romp. Additionally, Acclaim are playing it safe (at least in the American market) with the sports simulation NHL Breakaway '98.

There was no sign of the previously mooted Forsaken (aka Condemned), which is also another casualty of Acclaim's crackdown on the Saturn.

STOP PRESS. Perhaps we spoke too soon! On press day, Acclaim's UK representative told SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE that the conversion of Magic the Gathering is pretty much out of the equation, taking Acclaim's remaining Saturn titles this year down to one.



Magic: The Gathering could be canned...



... But NHL Breakaway is apparently still on.

E3 Announcement

Sported Out!

Sega of America give sports titles maximum resourses ■ Three quality simulations on the way ■ EA Sports still committed to Saturn - five new titles at least ■ But none shown at E3... boo!



Presumably Rodman hasn't yet carried out his threat to change his name to "Orgasm".

IN AMERICA, SPORTS SIMULATIONS can make or break a videogames machine, and it was with some of the world's greatest athletics-based titles that Sega's Megadrive out-paced Nintendo's 16-bit rival.

Perhaps a bit too late, Sega of America have realised that the sports profile of the Saturn could be improved immensely and set to work earlier this year to produce a series of exciting new projects.

Now here at SSM, we aren't exactly the world's number one sports fans (although WorldWide Soccer commands a great following), but we recognise quality when we see it, and SoA's new products look really, really cool.

The game that's really going to get the techheads exploding in orgasmic joy is undoubtedly World Series Baseball '98. Just like Athlete Kings, it runs in the Saturn's hi-res mode and boasts excellent 60 frames per second action along with some great animation. The big joke amongst games journos is that just about every baseball game in the world ever looks and plays identically. This game could actually break the mould. Batting is a lot more intuitive and easier to get to grips with, for starters, and whilst the points of view don't break with tradition, the visuals are lush enough to get anyone excited in playing a baseball sim.

The second game in the Sega portfolio is NBA Action '98. Clearly taking some inspiration from the NBA game on PlayStation, this title features some stunning motion capture, 30 frames per second action and even has texture-mapped faces taken directly from the NBA players themselves (we should have a Dennis Rodman picture for you to look at). Again, this game looks cool.

The piece de resistance could well be NHL All-Star Hockey '98, developed by Radical who produced the ace PowerPlay hockey (finally released this month after licensing wrangling). Expect PowerPlay to the power of ten: better gameplay, more options, superior graphics - superior everything!



Hi-res 60 frames per second action makes this new Baseball title stand out from the crowd.



The motion capture in the game is excellent.



Radical Entertainment are producing this.

EA Sports Return

Five New Titles: EA Sports still on-board

HERE'S A QUICK ROUND-UP OF THE new sports titles coming at the end of the year from EA Sports. Be advised that we could only play Sony versions at the E3 and that the screenshots shown are either from the PC or PlayStation games, simply because no Saturn stuff was on display at the EA stand at all!

Still, to business. We'll start with FIFA '98: The Road to the World Cup. The early PlayStation version we saw looked mostly similar to the disappointing FIFA '97, with EA Sports promising far superior playability and a lot more control. Tons more moves are also scheduled for the update. But can it compete with the mighty WorldWide '98?

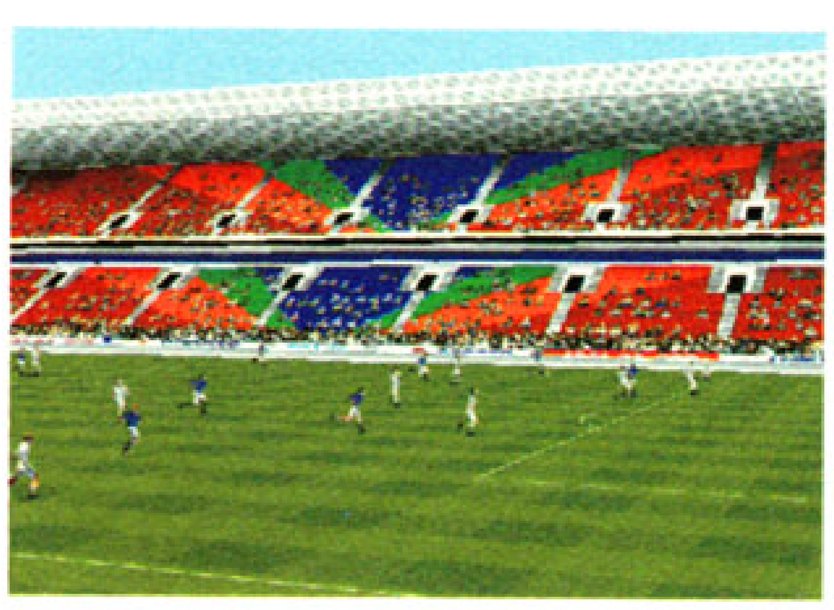
You can expect hardcore racing action in the form of NASCAR '98, which translates across the super-speedy antics of America's top motorsport (after IndyCar). Let's hope they don't just include the oval circuits! This will be interesting to compare to Sega Touring Car.

Next up we have the new Madden '98 title. The pre-production PlayStation version had an all-new 3D engine based around "virtual polygons" which apparently mean maximum speed and maximum detail.

The PlayStation NHL Hockey pre-production game we saw looked seriously cool with awesome motion captured animation. Again, it will be interesting to see how this compares with the Sega NHL title which is also very promising.

Finally we have NBA Live '98, which sports an all-new 3D engine and new gameplay mechanics. We hope this will improve over the near-awful '97 rendition on the Saturn.

Expect more on these games as soon as Saturn code emerges from EA's R&D labs... probably a couple of months after the PlayStation versions...



FIFA '98 is heading onto the Saturn.



NASCAR racing is another confirmed title.

HMV CHARTS

Week Ending June 27th

READERS CHARTS

Send us your top ten games and you could be mentioned in these hallowed pages next month. If you're truly lucky, there could be a free game in it for you! Send your charts to READER CHARTS, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, 37-39 MILL HARBOUR, ISLE OF DOGS, LONDON E14 9TZ. Congrats this month go to Peter Neill of Belfast.

	HMV CHARTS		READERS CHARTS		SATURN MAGAZINE CHARTS
1	Fighters MegaMix	1	Fighters MegaMix	1	Quake
2	Shining the Holy Ark	2	Saturn Bomberman	2	Marvel Super Heroes
3	Manx TT	3	NiGHTS	3	Duke Nukem 3D
4	FIFA '97	4	Manx TT	4	Sonic R
5	Soviet Strike	5	Fighting Vipers	5	Panzer Dragoon Saga
6	Saturn Bomberman	6	Virtua Cop 2	6	Resident Evil
7	Virtua Cop 2	7	Virtua Fighter 2	7	Last Bronx
8	Die Hard Arcade	8	Worldwide Soccer '97	8	Enemy Zero
9	Tomb Raider	9	Sega Rally	9	Sega Touring Car Championship
10	Dark Savior	10	Dark Savior	10	Virtua Fighter 3 (just kidding)

New Game

Go Karts!

JUST A QUICKIE ON ANOTHER SEGA sports sim, this time issuing forth from the European wing of Sega. Formula Karts is a 3D go-karting simulation with tons of tracks and karts to choose from. The PC version (also being handled by Sega) looks cool and this very, very early Saturn translation (pictured) should also be equally cool. The game is definitely on Sega's 1997 schedule and should be out around November time at the latest.



The coders have decided to concentrate first on getting the PC version out of the way, so at the moment, the Saturn rendition of the game is a long way off completion. Still, once the PC title is done and dusted, the coders can devote 100% of their resources to the Saturn title.

Well have more information (purchance a preview) next month.



Formula Karts is beginning to shape up on the Saturn (actual Sega code pictured).

Game of the film

Mortal Kombat Annihilation



IT'S A PROVEN FACT THAT VIDEO game to movie translations just don't work. Street Fighter was a flop, Super Mario Bros. was hilarious (for all the wrong reasons) and the less said about the Double Dragon flick the better. The exception to this rule however was Mortal Kombat, which achieved moderate critical success as well as earning a healthy $73 million in the US alone. Fans of the bloody beat 'em up and the original movie are in for a treat then this September when New Line Cinema release a sequel, Mortal Kombat Annihilation.

The film's storyline continues the events that transpired in the first movie with the evil Shao Kahn poised to take over the planet and transform into an extension of his Outworld realm. In an attempt to stop him, a band of heroes led by Liu Kang (Robin Shou), are the Earth's only hope. Producer Lawrence Kasanoff assures fans that the sequel will boast "bigger and longer fight sequences" with stunning CGI effects conjuring up a number of fantasy locations and even a digital Motaro. New characters include Jax, the robo-ninjas Cyrax and Smoke, an unmasked Sub-Zero, Sindel, Ermac, Rain and Sheeva. To coincide with the release of Mortal Kombat Annihilation, Midway are set to unveil MK4 in arcades around the world, although a Saturn version of this new 3D coin-op is very unlikely. However, we suppose we can make do with Mortal Kombat Trilogy...



Original cast members return in the new MK.



Hmmmm, so what's going on here eh?

SONIC R



It's been a long time coming, nearly three years in fact. But finally SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE is able to take an exclusive look at the ground-breaking Phase Two of Project Sonic, previewed at the recent E3 show in Atlanta. LEE NUTTER straps himself into the driver's seat and takes a spin around the awesome Sonic R!







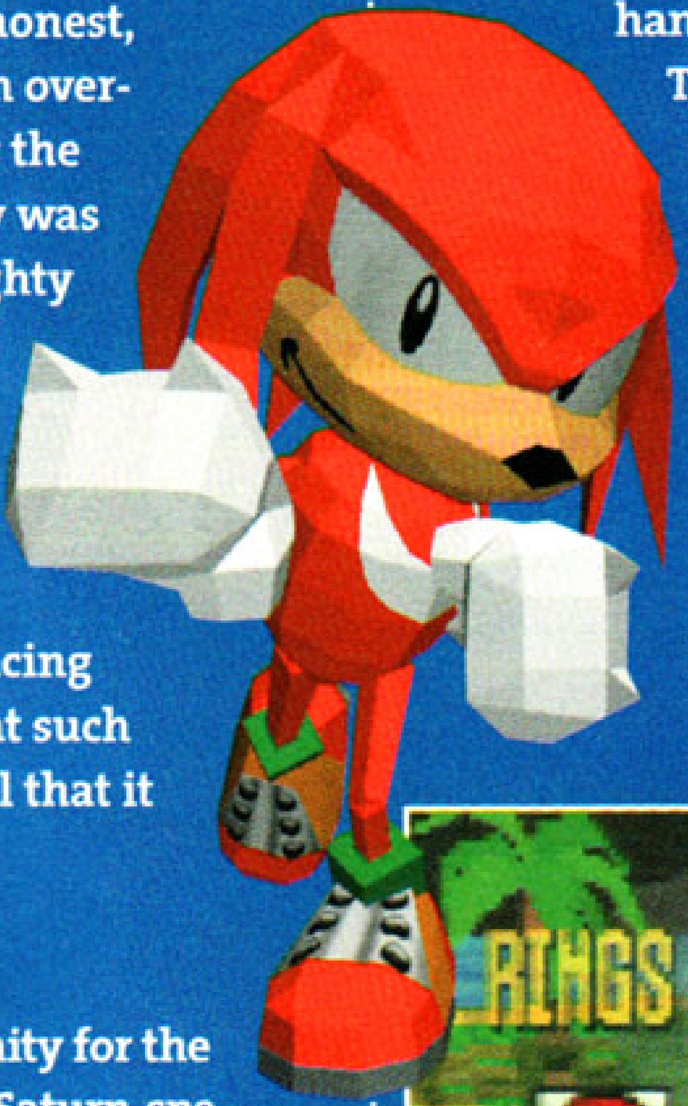
In the early demo pictured here, you can only control Sonic – in the final game, five characters are controllable with three more hidden away!



Take a shortcut through a village on the first track of the new Sonic R!

Sonic The Hedgehog returns in a stunning new racing title, which takes Saturn visuals way past PlayStation performance, challenging Nintendo 64!

Take a glance through this month's massive news section and it becomes apparent that there were few shock announcements or major revelations at the recent E3 Show. In fact, to be brutally honest, the amount of Saturn titles on display was far from overwhelming. Yet of the games which were shown for the Sega console one thing was clear, that their quality was of the highest seen thus far on the Saturn. The mighty Quake shocked and astounded delegates at the show, but it was the rather mysterious phase two of Project Sonic which raised more than a few eyebrows. The tentatively titled Sonic R came as a surprise to many not because it is the first Saturn-specific Sonic title and not because it is a racing game. Sonic R came as such a shock because even at such an early stage in its development, it was clear to all that it was going to be something very special indeed.



A SONIC TALE

Yep, it seems as though we've been waiting an eternity for the Sonic Team to get off their backsides and produce a Saturn-specific Sonic title. So it may come as a shock to learn that phase two of the mysterious Project Sonic is not being programmed by the Sonic Team, not directly anyway. Rather the programming duties for the awesome Sonic R have been handed over into the very capable hands of Travellers Tales. Who the hell are Travellers Tales you may well ask? Well, they're the talented bunch of programmers responsible for the incredible Disney licensed Toy Story on the Megadrive and the more recent Sonic 3D Blast on both the Megadrive and the Saturn. It would appear that Sega of Japan were most impressed with what the British programmers had achieved with their recent Sonic titles and with their awesome 3D engine. Thus, with the Sonic Team occupied with with the excellent Sonic Jam retro pack, the programming responsibilities were handed over to Travellers Tales.



A brilliant magnetic power-up allows you to attract rings towards you as you pass them. Just like in Sonic 3 on the Megadrive!

>>



Sonic's girlfriend Amy Rose gets a nice little car to trundle about in!



A shielded Sonic screams up to challenge Dr Robotnik in his patented flying machine!



Look at the light-sourcing effects on Sonic, Robotnik and the other racers in the distance. Wow!



Streaking past the stunning waterfall on the first track. Knuckles is way out in the lead though.

Sonic's back in what is definitely going to be Saturn's best looking game – already the visuals look amazing – and the game's barely 20% complete at this stage!

>> However, that's not to say that the Sonic Team won't be taking an interest on this critical project, quite the opposite in fact. Three members of the Sonic Team are currently assisting Travellers Tales on several aspects of the game, from track design to the artwork, ensuring that the finished product lives up to everyone's high expectations.



SONIC ARSE? NO

Leading right up to the recent E3 Show in Atlanta, rumours began circulating that the latest instalment in the Sonic the Hedgehog series was in fact a racing game. My confidence wavered as visions of the Game Gear Sonic Drift filled my head, and I have to admit to feeling more than a tad disappointed. After the amazing graphical prowess of the 3D part of Sonic Jam, the prospect of a blatant Mario Kart rip-off failed to get my juices flowing. However, upon exclusively play testing the latest Sonic wares, my skepticism was proven wholly unjustified, as it would appear that Sonic R is the graphical and gameplay feast which fellow Sonic fans are long overdue.

With innovation being a word synonymous with the Sonic Team, it comes as little surprise that there's so much more to Sonic R than a straightforward race to the finish. Players take control of Sonic or one of his woodland chums and race around the luscious, texture-mapped 3D courses all the way to the finishing line. Rather than sticking rigidly to the predetermined route, players are able to deviate from the circuit and explore the vast 3D environment, in similar fashion to the walking bits of NiGHTS but at high speeds. The idea of the exploration element being to locate and retrieve the stolen Chaos Emeralds which are hidden around the different race tracks. Once players have managed to grab the Chaos Emeralds, it's a mad dash to the finishing line before the other contenders get there. In addition, the popular ring collecting activities of previous Sonic games have been retained for Sonic R. Collect a specified amount of rings and certain buildings open up, allowing players to access the hidden routes therein, littered with power-ups and other such secret goodies.

A total of five courses are planned for Sonic R, including a mysterious castle, a tropical island, a highway with no speed limit and a secret base including traps. A fifth, hidden level is also planned which becomes available once the game has been completed, set inside a huge emerald with transparent obstacles and glowing crystal walls. Each of the five courses offer players multiple routes, some of which may be more hazardous but shorter and others which may be longer but are a tad simpler to negotiate.



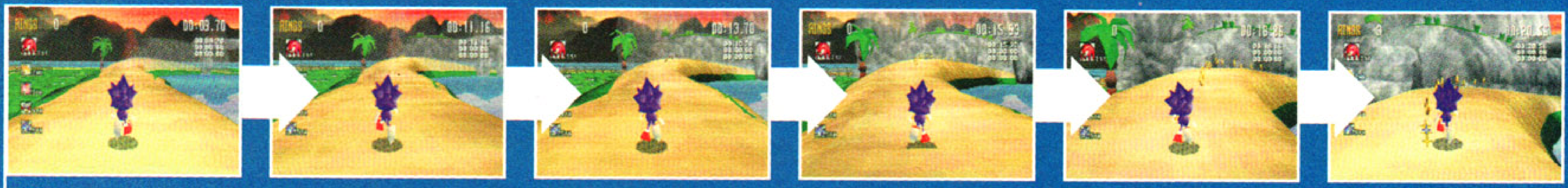




Transparencies... Reflections... This game has it all!



This bit's kind of reminiscent of Mario Kart R...



This sequence shows how scenery fades in Nintendo 64 style as opposed to ugly pop-up as seen in other Saturn and PlayStation titles. Yet another awesome new effect seen in Sonic R!







Check out these stunning visuals: yes it looks better than Mario Kart 64!





Check out the amazing reflective effects (top right). PlayStation can't do this.





Sonic R's stunning visuals will be matched by solid gameplay courtesy of the Sonic Team – have no doubts – this game is going to amaze you!

Along these routes players discover familiar Sonic power-ups to collect which enhance Sonic's abilities. For instance, speed boots which effectively double Sonic's speed for a short period are already present in the early version of the game, as are a range of shield power-ups which surround Sonic in a transparent aura.

Sonic R is unique in that it is the first Sonic game which allows gamers to play as any of the characters found in the game. Though at the moment only Sonic himself is playable, expect playable versions of Knuckles the Echidna, Miles "Tails" Prower, Dr Robotnik and Amy for the finished game, along with a whole host of secret characters not yet announced. Though the control method is yet to be properly implemented, full analogue compatibility is expected for Sonic R, allowing for more precise control and smoother, more fluid movements than is possible with the digital pad. Each of the characters are likely to control quite differently, with varying top speeds, acceleration, cornering abilities and so forth, as well as differing modes of transport. Sonic, Knuckles and Tails all run by foot (though Tails is expected to fly also) whereas Amy sits behind the wheel of her car and Dr Robotnik pilots his space craft around the circuit.



In addition to the impressive range of characters and tracks, five different play modes are planned for Sonic R. The standard single-player mode, split-screen two-player mode and time attack modes are planned, along with the more bizarre tag and relay modes. We're not quite sure how the latter two are likely to work at this point in time, but rest assured they are going to be awesome!

GRAPHICAL FRIPPERY

The thing which surprised us most when we first played Sonic R, is that this incredible game does not use the Sonic World engine which produced some awesome Mario 64-style graphics. Instead, Travellers Tales created their own, equally impressive 3D engine which is more than a match for Nintendo's Mario Kart 64, indeed bearing more than a passing resemblance to the game. As such, the visuals of Sonic R are some of the finest ever seen on the Saturn. You want a rocksolid framerate? Awesome reflective water effects the PlayStation could never do? Mind-blowing lighting effects on Sonic and all the racers? Well they're all in this 20% complete code. What you have seen here is just a taste of what's to come. Stay tuned to SSM and prepare yourself for graphical treats you just won't believe!



This water bubble power-up allows Sonic to rush over water without being submerged. Check out the transparency effect!



Just as in Mario Kart 64, Sonic R has plenty of hidden short cuts for you to discover. Some of them require knowledge of the track layout, and some require skill.



For example on this sequence you need to collect a certain number of rings in order to get through these doors. If you don't have 40 rings here, you're stuffed.



But if you do, you can rush through the doors and scream ahead! Later shortcuts involve 80 or even more rings in order to open up. And that's just one kind of shortcut...

KATS SATO INTERVIEW
SONIC R PRODUCER SPEAKS TO SSM!

We're sure that Saturn owners are going to be absolutely amazed with what Travellers Tales has achieved with Sonic R. But not satisfied with merely having the game, we went behind the scenes to get all the latest information on this and forthcoming Sonic projects from the game's producer, Mr Kats Sato. Look out for more exclusive Sonic R interviews - coming soon!

SSM First of all, can you tell us your position at Sega and your relation to Sonic R?
KATS SATO My name is Kats Sato and I am the producer of Sonic R.

SSM What products have you worked on in the past?
KATS SATO I was game designer and character designer in Clockwork Knight 1&2 and also worked on the Outrunners and Golden Axe arcade games. More recently I have moved to SOE as senior producer.

SSM Can you tell us the origin of Sonic R? What are Sega's primary objectives with the game?
KATS SATO To make a good fun racing game as most of the other racing games on Saturn are very serious. Also, we wanted to make an original Sonic game.

SSM Travellers Tales are programming Sonic R. Were they chosen for the task by the Sonic Team? How did the association come about?
KATS SATO Sega appointed Travellers Tales because of the good work they did on the Megadrive version of Sonic 3D. Sonic Team were very impressed by this. Previously they had also done Toy Story which was incredible for the Megadrive. I can tell you a funny story. When we were working on Clockwork Knight we were influenced by some things in Mickey Mania which Jon Burton and Travellers Tales had done. Later I found out that Jon had been influenced by Clockwork Knight when making Toy Story.

SSM Why aren't Sonic Team programming the game themselves?
KATS SATO Sonic Team were busy with Sonic Jam and then started on another Saturn project.

SSM What is Sonic Team's exact involvement with Sonic R? How are they going to be working with Travellers Tales?
KATS SATO Sonic Team are designing the game and creating artwork amongst other things. Some members of Sonic Team will be based in England to work with Travellers Tales.

SSM The SonicWorld section of Sonic Jam looks amazing. Is any of this technology,or Sonic Team's know-how, being passed on to Travellers Tales?
KATS SATO Not really. Travellers Tales have developed their own very good 3D routines, but they have had some assistance from Sonic Team for certain things.



SOE Senior Producer Kats Sato promises us an awesome Sonic racer!

SSM Sonic R is definitely Phase 2 of Project Sonic, isn't it? Is Sonic ever going to appear in an original Sonic Team produced platform game on Saturn?
KATS SATO I can't comment on that at this moment.

SSM Why the decision to go for a racing game?
KATS SATO We just thought it would be a great idea to make a racing game with Sonic characters.

SSM Yuji Naka is synonymous with Sonic and the Sonic Team. What is his involvement with Sonic R?
KATS SATO He is general producer for this title and will closely follow the progress.

SSM Why is the game called "Sonic R"? Does the R stand for anything?
KATS SATO The 'R' stands for many different things and not just racing.



It is up to the player to decide exactly what.

SSM The demo at E3 was very early. When did work begin on the game and what sort of status was the E3 demo at?
KATS SATO Work began after Travellers Tales finished the Saturn conversion of Sonic 3D. We would have liked to have moved E3 by a month because the version we showed was not even a proper first playable version.

SSM How representative of the final game is the demo? Is the feature track virtually complete or is there still much detail to add?
KATS SATO There is still much to be done, even on this first track.

SSM We only got to see one of the five tracks which we presume is the first course. What kind of ideas do you have for the other courses?
KATS SATO You will have to wait and see.

SSM What kind of power-ups and extra features are going to be on the tracks?
KATS SATO There will be many, but we do not wish to reveal all these just yet.

SSM What's the situation with the game's characters? Can you control all of them?
KATS SATO You can control 4 of the 5 at the beginning. You will get to play using Dr Robotnik later on. There will be a lot of hidden characters.

SSM How are they different to use in terms of gameplay?
KATS SATO Very different. Some are faster, others turn easier, etc. Also, they will have special moves. For example Tails will be able to fly.

SSM Obviously we need to talk about the spectacular graphics. What are the key features of the graphics system Travellers Tales are using for Sonic R?
KATS SATO Travellers Tales are doing an incredible job with some very good effects such as transparencies, gouraud shading, lighting, etc.

SSM The game runs at a constant 30fps in the demo. Will this remain the same on the final game?
KATS SATO Yes. Travellers Tales are confident that they have the skills to achieve this.

SSM All Sonic games in the past have featured an amazing Special Stage. How does Sonic R continue this tradition?
KATS SATO Sorry, but I can't tell you this yet.

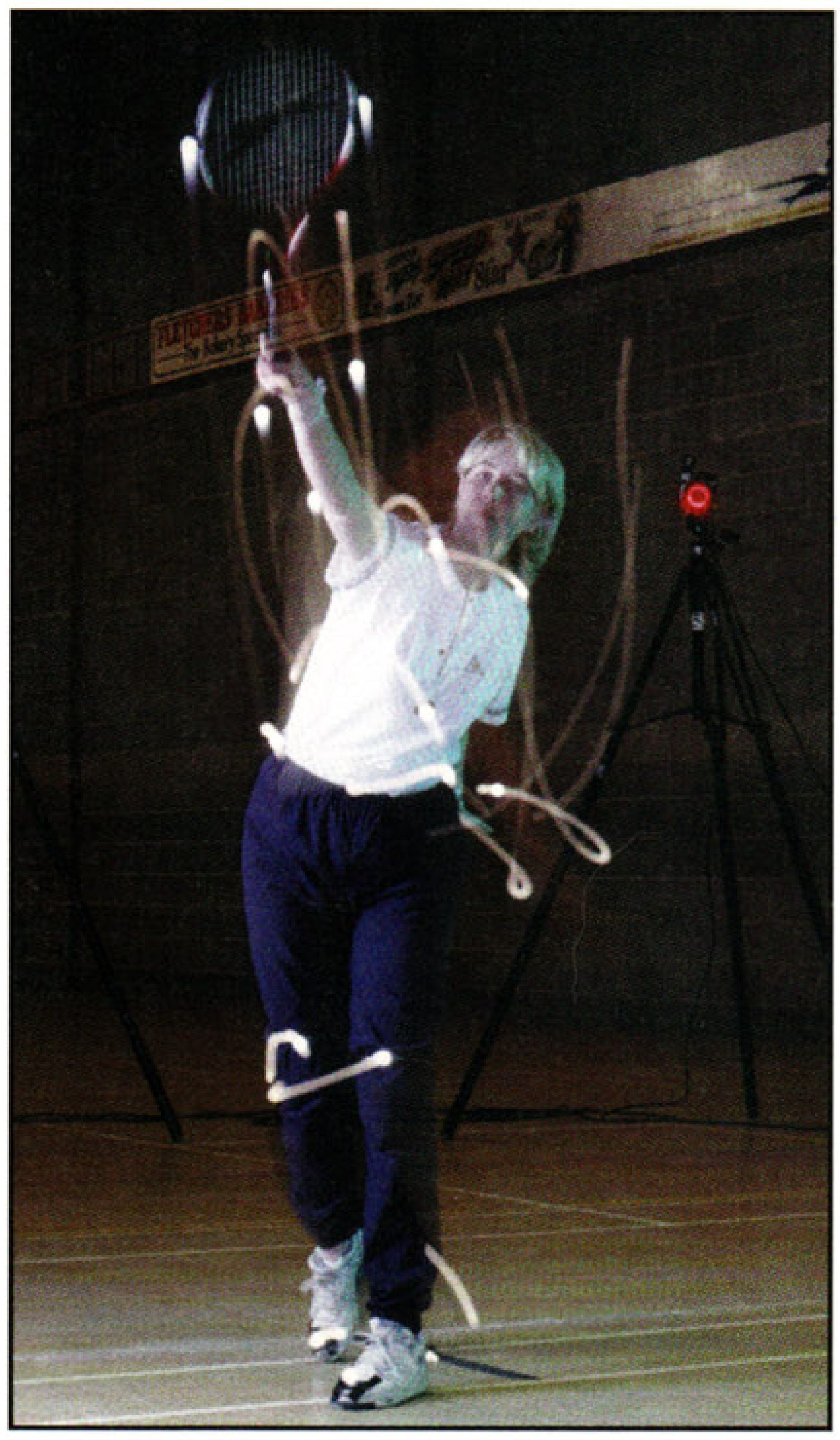
SSM Obviously there's bound to be some comparison between Sonic R and Mario Kart 64. What do you think are the main similarities and differences?
KATS SATO Yes, it's a racing game, but we have added a lot more exploration to Sonic R and other hidden features.

SSM What's the game's schedule? How complete is the game now and when will it be finished?
KATS SATO The game will be on sale in November.

SSM Thanks a lot for your time.







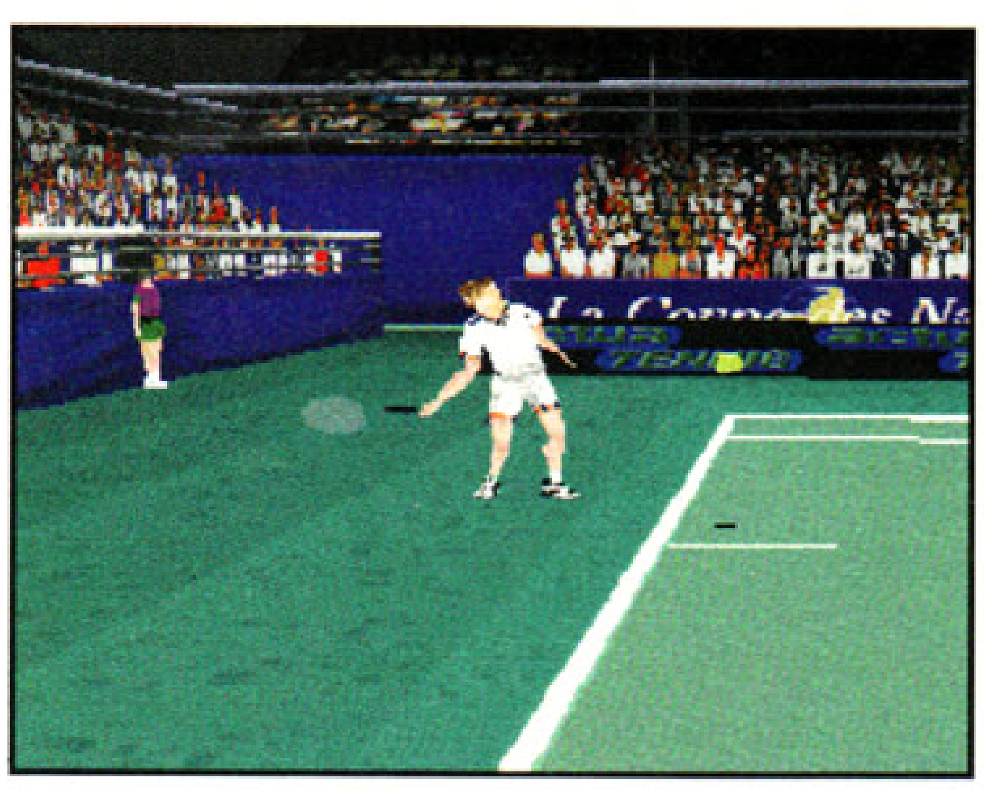


ACTUA SPORTS

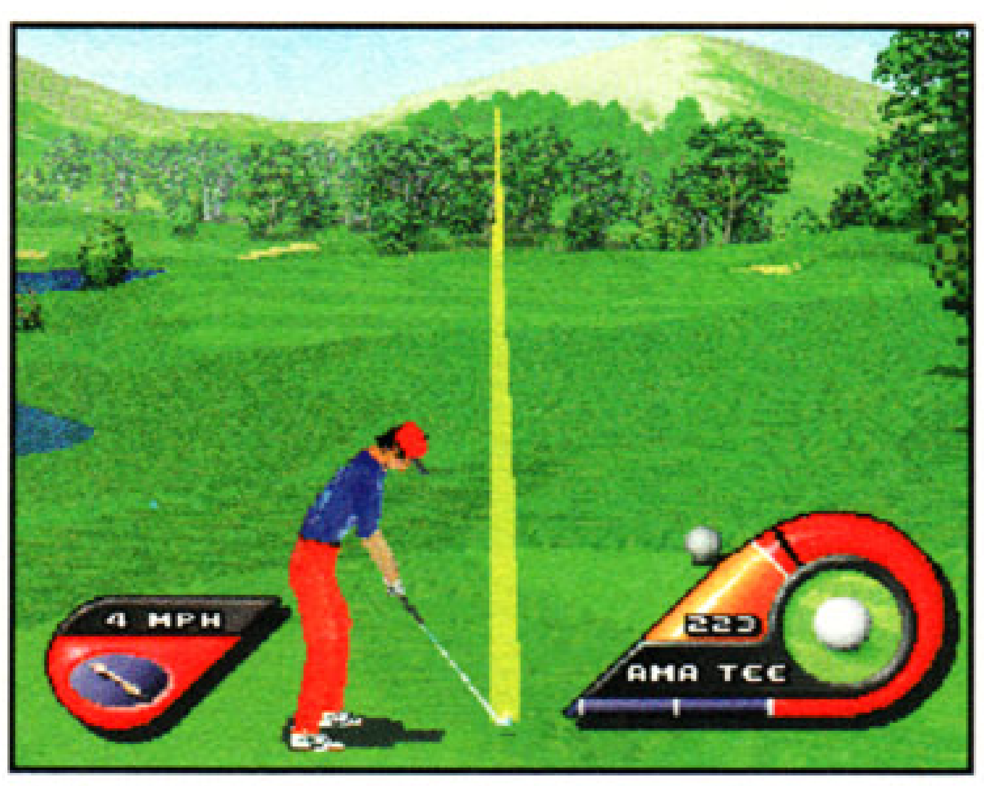
Soccer, golf, ice hockey, tennis, topless darts... is there any sporting profession that Gremlin Interactive don't excel at? After the relative success of Actua Soccer Club Edition, and with the promise of more quality titles to come, MATT YEO takes a sneak peek at what our friends "oop north" are up to next.

As possibly the leading UK third party Saturn developer, Gremlin Interactive are currently in an enviable position. Not only has the Sheffield based company seen its profile raised to even higher levels, thanks to a recent stock flotation, but its purchase of creative powerhouse DMA and investment in motion capture technology has cemented its reputation as one of the industry's premiere software houses. With an impressive portfolio of sports games due for release over the next six months, it would appear then that even further success is just around the corner.

Although recent Gremlin Saturn titles have included the likes of Loaded and Hardcore 4x4, this innovative company now looks set to excel with a number of original and sequel sports titles that aim to combine the company's extensive motion capture expertise with some of the world's most popular athletic activities. While Gremlin are hardly the first video game developers to dabble with the likes of soccer, tennis and hockey titles their attempts to produce realistic and accurate translations of these sports is what should set them apart from the likes of EA and Virgin. The following four titles are all scheduled to be released over the next few months with Premier Manager '98 and Arms Race set to see the light of day early next year.



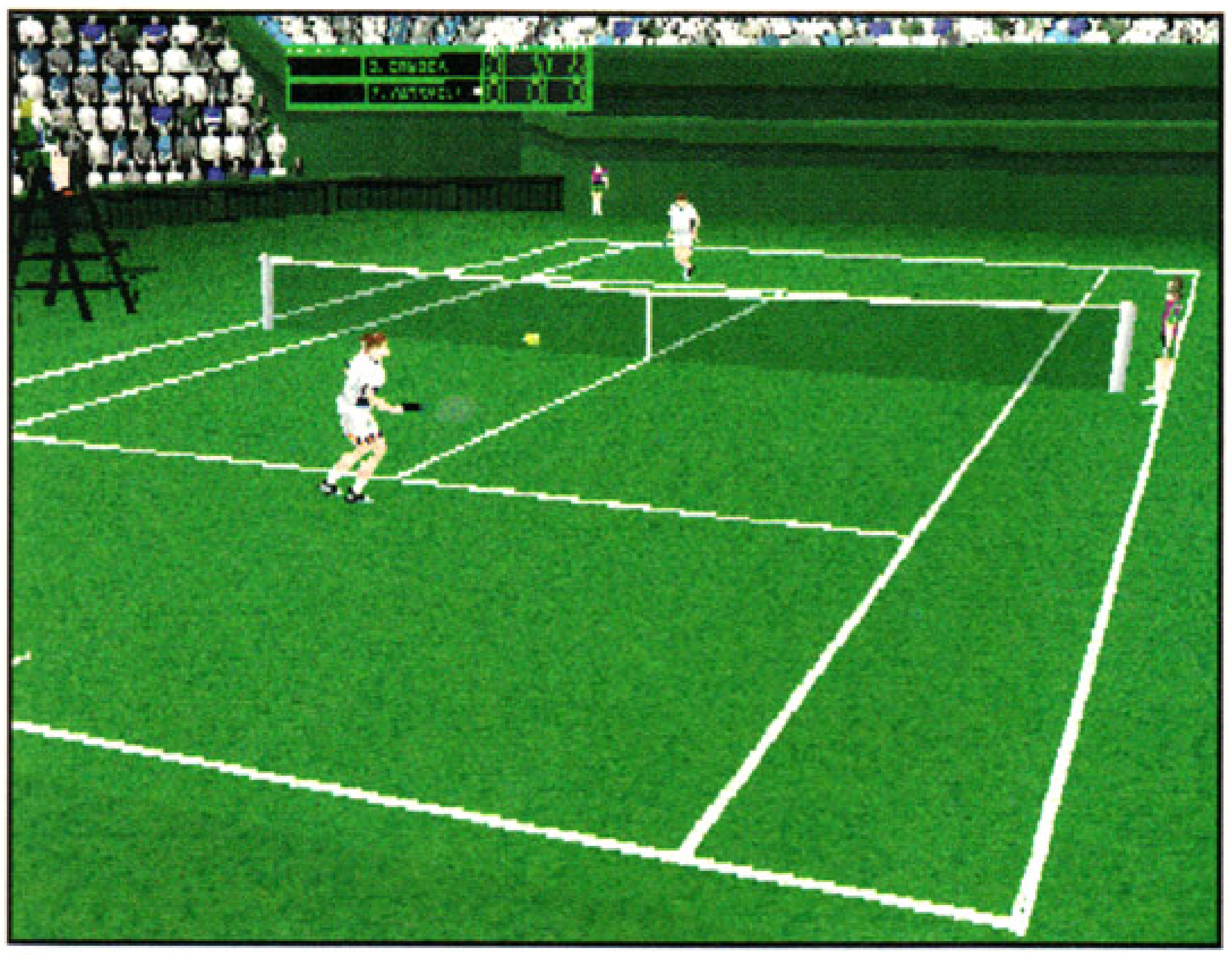
From the dramatic highs and lows of Wimbledon...

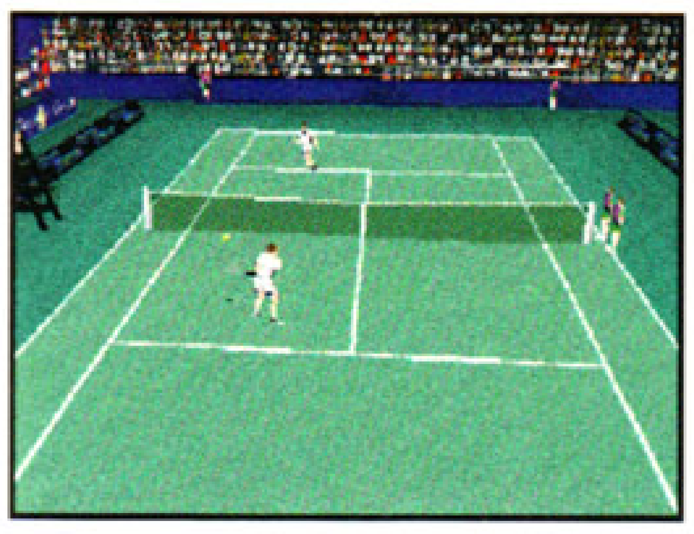
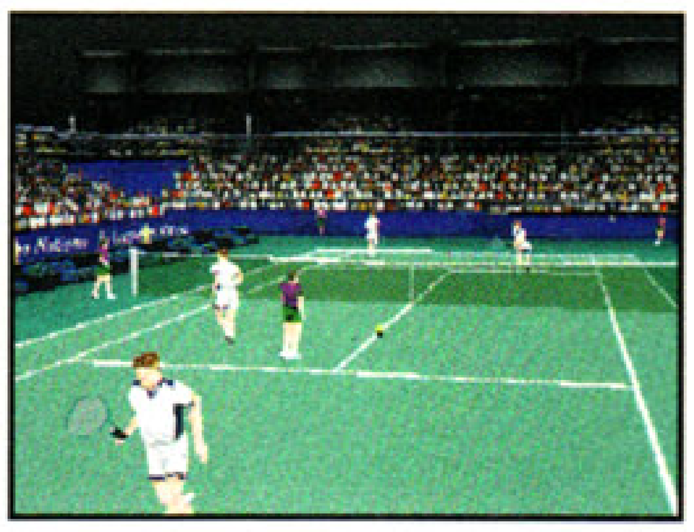


...to the Ryder Cup, Actua Sports has it all!

ACTUA TENNIS

As I write this, it's bucketing down outside, which is typical for an English summer I suppose, and Wimbledon is a complete

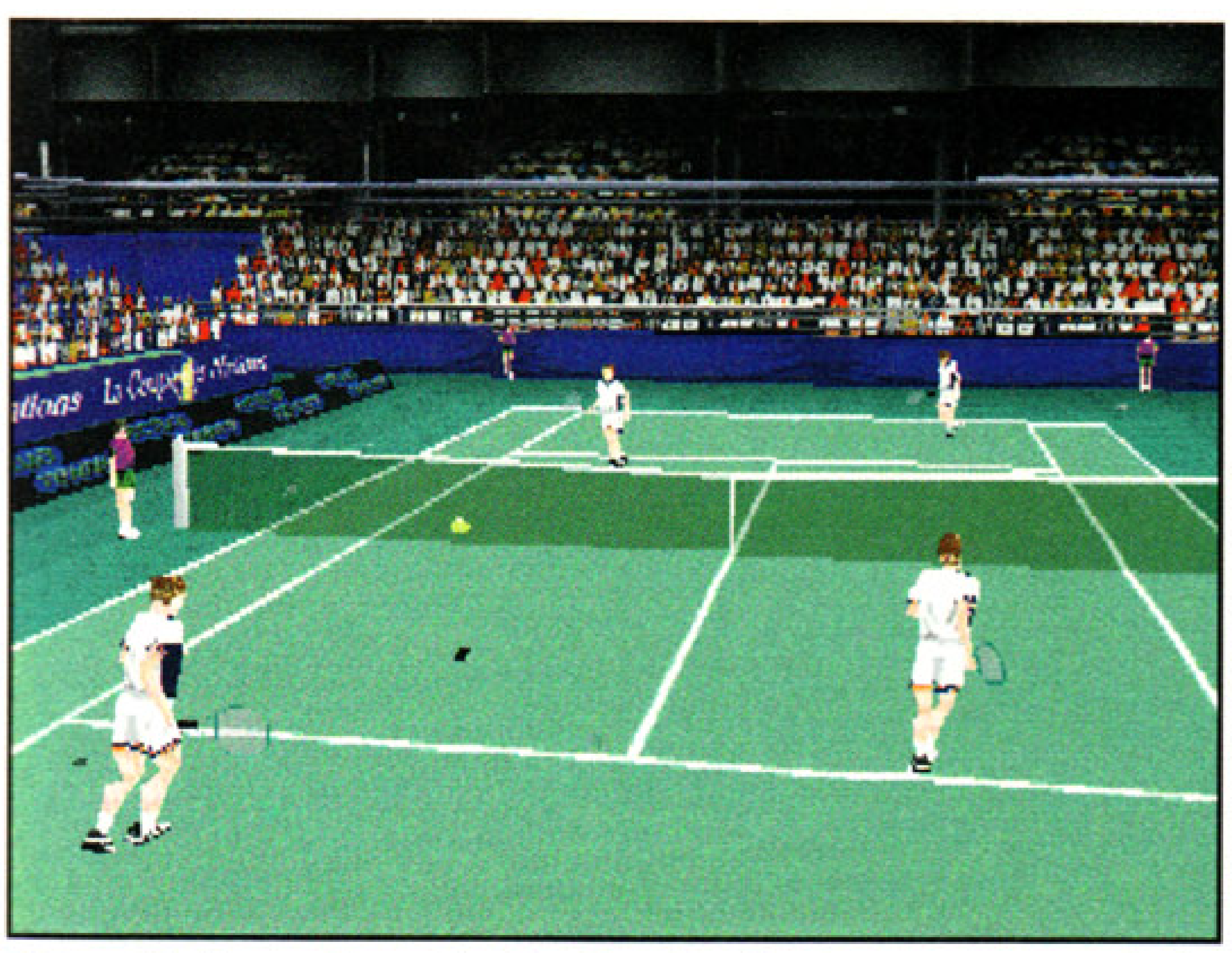

3D courts allow players to view matches from any angle. Attention to detail and motion captured players add to the game's sense of realism.

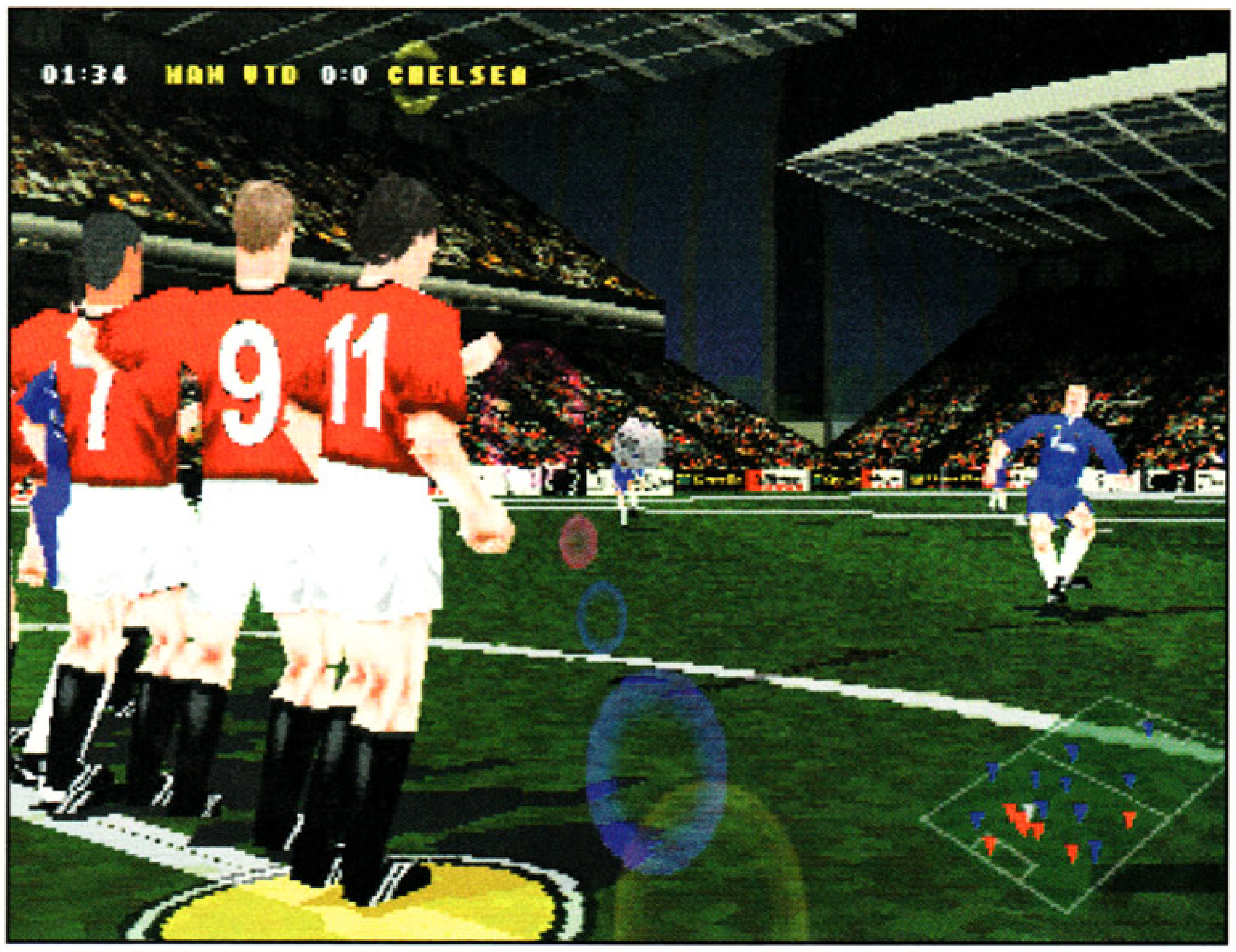


Actua Tennis contains a numer of courts including outdoor and er... indoor.

wash out. But Saturn sports fans need not worry about wet and windy weather as Gremlin are soon to release Actua Tennis, the latest in their series of Actua Sports branded titles and one that should more than make up for our crappy climate. Actua Tennis contains all the features that made the other Actua titles so successful with Gremlin pushing their technical abilities even further. All the players in the game are animated using the latest motion capture technology, giving the full, fluid movement of real tennis pros (with real life players being filmed for the full effect). Matches take place in true 3D courts, allowing you to view the action from any angle and to replay those dubious line calls again and again.

The final ace that Gremlin serve up is the presence of two celebrity commentators in the shapely form of Sue Barker and the chunky Barry Davies. Actua Tennis also features a full range of playing options, including Professional and Amateur tournaments and tours, as well as singles, doubles and mixed doubles matches. The game contains motion captured umpires, line judges and ball boys just to add that final realistic touch. What more could any tennis fan ask for?

Actua Tennis is due to be released in September.


If it's multi-player action you're after then Actua Tennis serves up some gripping doubles and mixed doubles matches.



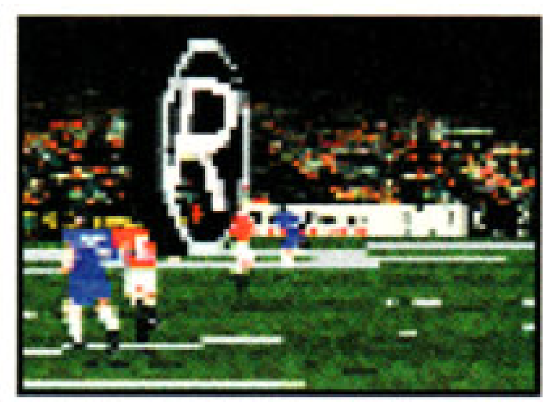
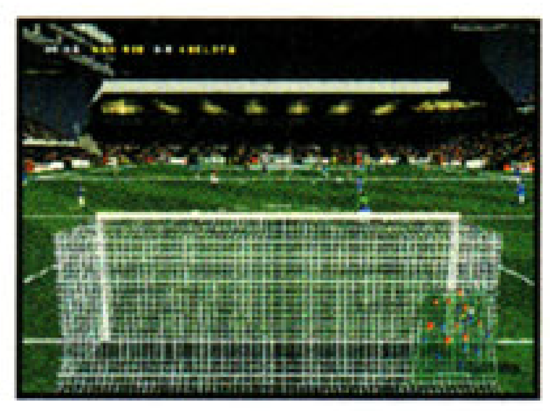
Actua Soccer 2 could be the definitive fans' game as all 92 English clubs are represented, from the stars of Man. United to Darlington

ACTUA SOCCER 2

With Actua Soccer Club Edition being a reasonable success on Saturn it should come as no surprise to learn that Gremlin are following it up with an enhanced and improved version of their footie game. Actua Soccer 2 could well be the definitive fans' game as all 92 English football league clubs are represented, from the heady heights of Manchester United to such struggling lower division teams as Darlington (sorry lads). All team squads will be true representations of the clubs as they stand at the start of the '97/98 season, so it's bye-bye to Eric Cantona and hello to some obscure Italian player with an appalling haircut no doubt.

On top of this, every stadium that hosts a game in the Premier League has been recreated by the Actua team to give players that true feeling of 'being there.' So, the likes of Highbury and Anfield are instantly recognisable and even obscure third Division grounds are to receive this graphically accurate treatment. Other features include a full range of weather conditions, stadium lights allow nighttime play (complete with real time shadows), user definable championships enable players to create their own customisable championships, practice in a handy training ground and an improved 3D engine completes the package. To compliment the dulcet tones of Club Edition's Barry Davies, soccer pro Trevor Brooking will also be adding his input to the game's commentary.

Actua Soccer 2 is due to be released in October



Footie fans will be pleased to learn that Actua Soccer 2 contains all of the '96/'97 British squads.

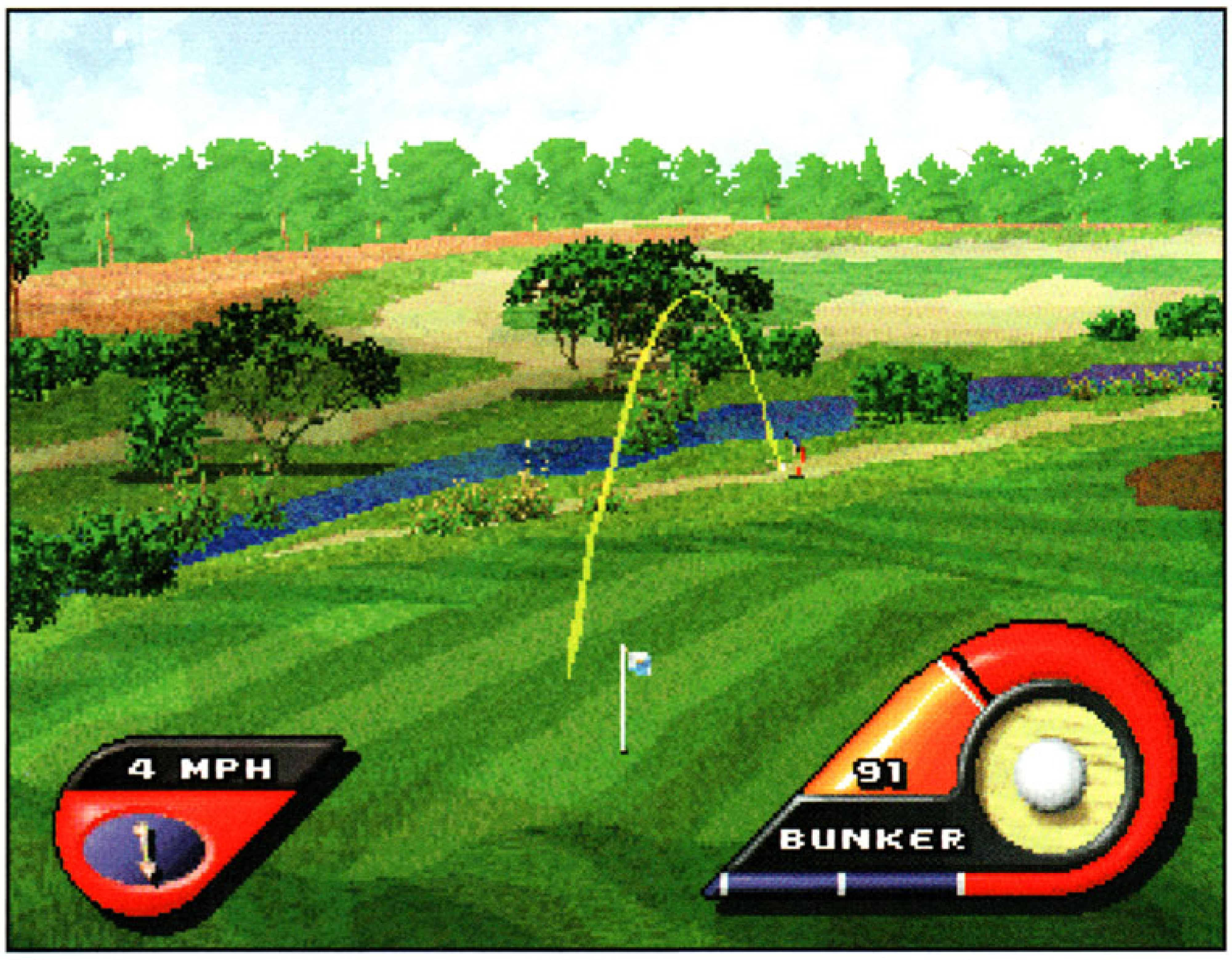
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Gremlin have listened to the criticisms levelled at Actua Soccer Club Edition and promise an improved sequel.


Although these screenshots are taken from the PC version, the Saturn game should still look as stunning.



Although other companies have released their own ice hockey games, Gremlin's motion capture technology should make this title the most realistic yet.







By the end of the year there will be an Actua Sports game for everyone...

Fans of the original Actua Golf were critical that the inclusion of one course was far too limiting in terms of gameplay and longevity

ACTUA ICE HOCKEY

While there are already a few quality Ice Hockey games available on the Sega Saturn, including NHL Hockey '97, Gremlin are set to release their own interpretation of this hard-hitting sport. However, unlike other versions of this slippery game, Actua Ice Hockey uses full motion captured players adding an all-important element of realism to each and every match. The winners of the British championship play-offs, the Sheffield Stealers are providing the technical advice for the game as well as being the models for the extensive motion capturing.

To further enhance Actua Ice Hockey's sense of realism, Gremlin have utilised a new feature dubbed 'Ambient Realism' which adds prerecorded commentary as well as simulated crowd noises, cheerleader chants and even the sound of players hitting each other. Full international teams will be selectable including England who were unfortunately knocked out of the last world cup by Switzerland.

Actua Ice Hockey is due to be released in November



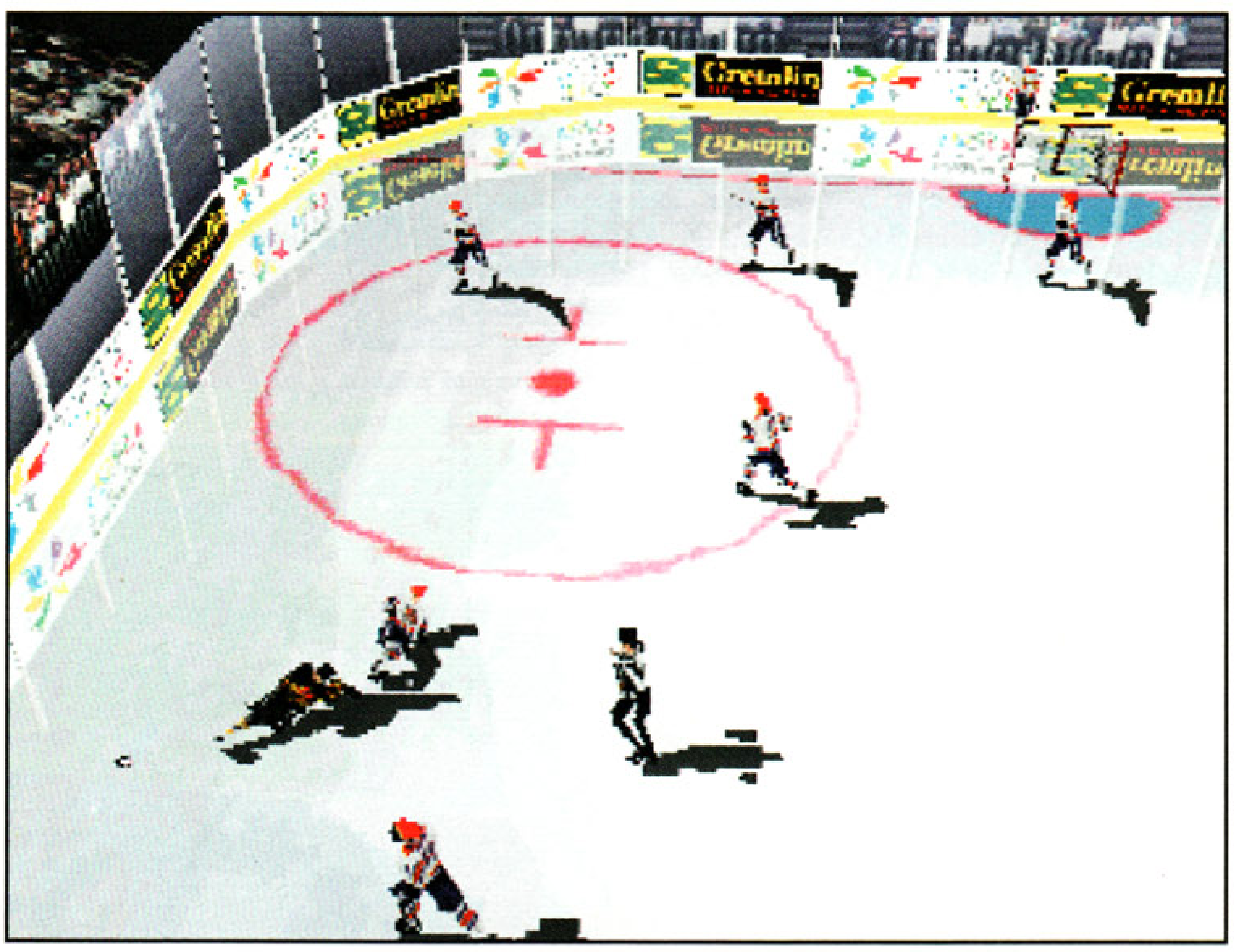
Gremlin have opted for some smooth, Sky Sports style in-game angles.

ACTUA GOLF 2

Completing their line-up of impressive sports titles, Actua Golf 2 is the follow-up to Gremlin's 90% scoring original. Fans of the game were critical that the inclusion of only one solitary course was far too limiting in terms of gameplay and longevity, even if the technical aspects of the sport were spot-on. The sequel therefore addresses this problem by including six completely new courses to tackle (plus the original two) as well as an updated graphical engine which features water reflections, improved textures and scenery.

Actua Golf 2 also includes the same true 3D playing environment as the original game, allowing total freedom of movement anywhere on any of the eight courses, and a variety of selectable camera angles enabling players to examine courses and track shots once struck. Once again, professional commentary will play an important part in the game's realism with the legendary Peter Allis and Alex Hay strutting their vocal stuff.

Actua Golf 2's release date has yet to be announced



Multiple camera angles, fast-paced play and hard-hitting action should make Actua Ice Hockey a winner.



Fans of the original game now face the challenge of eight tricky courses.


IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT
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ARE YOU THE UK'S NO.1 PLAYER?

DUNGEONS AND DRAGONS

Capcom return to the Saturn with yet another pixel-perfect arcade conversion... but this time the 2D masters have seen fit to convert TWO coin-ops for the price of one!

BY	CAPCOM
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	BEAT' EM UP
RELEASE	TBA





One of Sega's most fondly remembered pre-Virtua arcade games has to be Golden Axe - a simple side-on scrolling fighting game combining mythological sword-slinging with awesome magical attacks. The series was sequelled twice until Sega left the world of 2D behind to concentrate on the wonders of 3D technology with its awesome Model 1 technology.

Enter Capcom. They knew that there was still a market for cool 2D games of this type and they pretty much took up the Golden Axe formula but added in the lucrative Dungeons and Dragons role-playing license. Not that there's really any adventuring aspects contained in the Capcom games - it's fighting action all the way!

Capcom produced two D&D titles: Towers of Doom and a sequel, Shadows of Mystaria. Both were pretty epic affairs and both of them are included in the Saturn version, hence the inclusion of the word "Collection" in the title of the translation. At the time of writing we've only managed to get a look at the Towers of Doom part of the pack but already we're seriously impressed.

The Saturn's the king of 2D games and Capcom have managed to include virtually everything from the arcade original. Just about all of the animation is in and no matter how packed the screen is with sprites (and it does get VERY busy), you never get any slowdown!

Capcom are clearly attempting to pitch this collection at fans of the arcade games, the real Capcom purists. That being the case, there is no "remixed" music streamed from the CD - the synthesised PCM tunes have instead been brought over lock, stock and barrel. The CD is put to use on being accessed for further gameplay, at least once per level. Thankfully, loading (although frequent) is very fast and doesn't affect the gameplay.

Although the arcade games were not hugely popular outside of Japan, there's no denying that the quality of the conversion here. Capcom have continued their fine tradition of bringing their best arcade machines to the Saturn and making the conversions every bit as good as the coin-op originals.

Although there has been no substantive news as of yet, it's virtually assured that the Dungeons and Dragons Collection will eventually end up on the shelves of UK games suppliers, probably through the auspices of Virgin Interactive. SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE aims to keep you guys fully informed!



The sprites are all derived from the D&D role-playing games.

I CAN DO MAGIC! MY OH MY!

Each character has access to a number of spells that once cast, bring down annihilation on the masses... and certain spells perform better against certain sprites. For example, the cleric's Turn Undead incantation literally spells doom for entire platoons of zombies! This is just about the only connection to the D&D RPG.





Aha! This will be some magical spell in effect then.



Yet another spell-slinging session as the hero rains down magical death!





The torch has been passed from Sega's Golden Axe to Capcom's Dungeons and Dragons games... both of which are heading from the arcades and towards the Saturn! Hence this preview.





PREVIEW

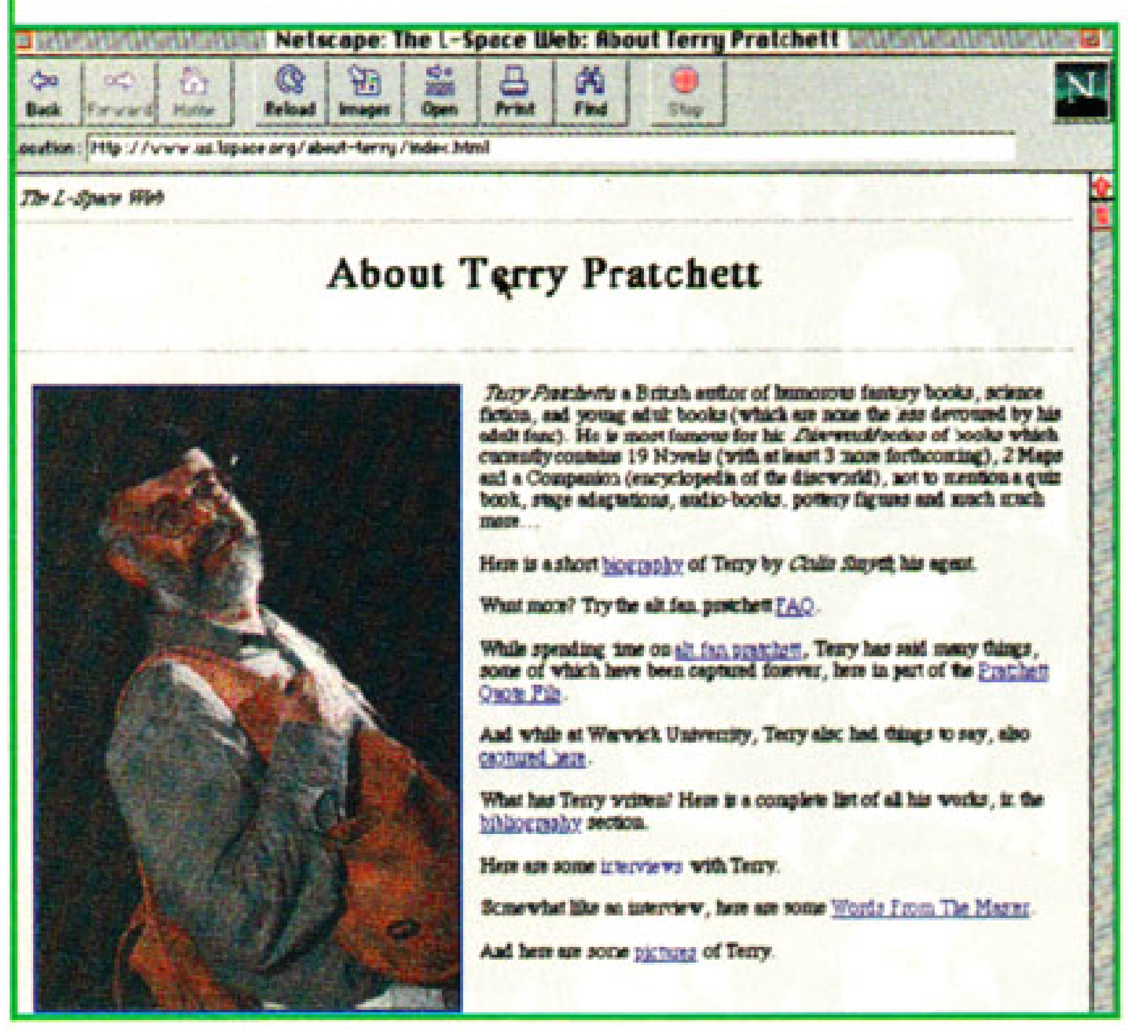
DISCWORLD 2

Most Saturn titles are stunning action-packed arcade games, so any "point-and-click" adventures out there better be something special to grab our attention. Will Discworld 2 have what it takes to tempt Terry Pratchett fans?

BY	PSYGNOSIS
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	GRAPHIC ADVENTURE
RELEASE	TBA

THE GEEK SHALL INHERIT THE EARTH

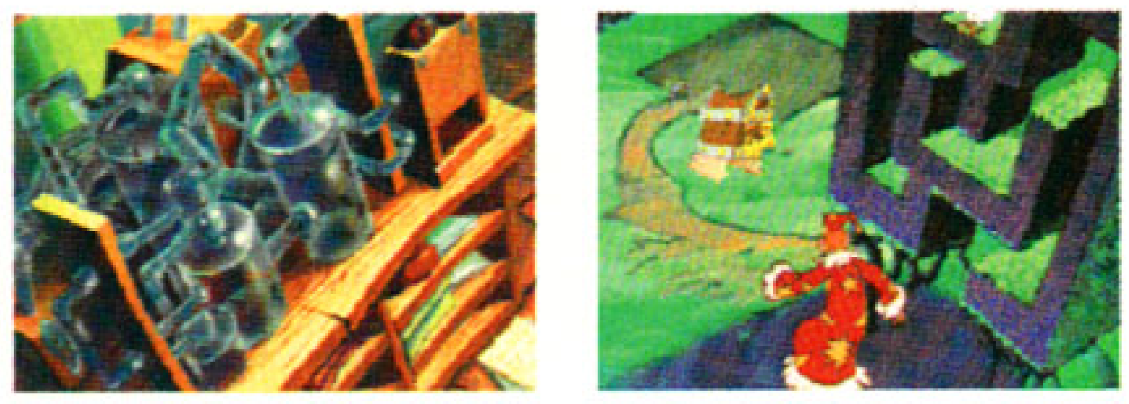
Those of you with Internet access will no doubt have stumbled across the huge number of Terry Pratchett related sites on the 'net. His books have a huge cult following and it seems that the bearded one is very active on the 'net as well - he has his own discussion group, and regularly contributes to many personal fan web sites. So it would seem as if this combination of Pratchett and video gaming is a potential match made in heaven!





If you have any anorak-wearing, geeky science fiction loving friends, chances are they've told you all about Terry Pratchett. For the uninitiated, he basically writes fantasy books (you know, those paper things with lots of words in - your mum probably has some) and his most famous creation by far is the Discworld series. Spanning a mammoth 19 novels... so far, and set entirely in a circular world which sits on the back of four elephants, which in turn are standing on the back of a giant turtle, the series has been a phenomenal success. Of course the novels have also spawned a mountain of merchandise including t-shirts, models, a cartoon series and an inevitable video game.

The Grim Reaper is bored. In fact he's so fed up with harvesting the dead that he's given up, and decided to spend the rest of his days relaxing on a sun-drenched beach sipping expensive cocktails. Quite a good career move if you ask me, the only problem this causes though is the build-up of dead people around the strange streets of Discworld, making life for the peaceful and very weird citizens something of a pain. Imagine, for example, popping down to the shops for some lunch - only to find stinking rotten zombies bumping against the sandwich counter or finding the underground packed with the undead. So Discworld needs a hero and guess what? It's you! Taking on the role of amateur wizard Rincewind, you're required to find Mr Death and convince him to return to his corpse-collecting ways. If all this sounds like the introduction to some bizarre adventure game, that's because it is, and Discworld 2 is the king of bizarre adventure games.



Engaging a gorilla in conversation is tough, even for Rincewind.



The whole game has a very cartoony feel, with some really well-drawn characters and a large number of equally impressive locations.



That's Rincewind in the red coat, he's facing the camera and probably delivering a 'comedy' line.



A great example of Discworld 2's hand drawn artwork, every scene is colourful and impressive.



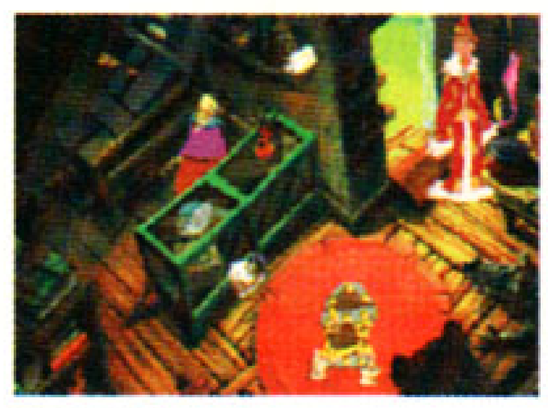






After completely failing to score with the gorgeous Marilyn Monroe type shown on the left, Rincewind lowers his sights a bit and goes for the old hag fortune teller (above). She may be past it but she's got a very nice personality. Probably.

If all this sounds like the introduction to some bizarre adventure game, that's because it is, and Discworld 2 is the king of bizarre adventure games.



This is the village shop...



...they don't sell Mars bars!



The hero enters stage left...



...and delivers a 'witty' joke.

Following in the footsteps of the original game, Discworld 2 features the same hand drawn cartoon visuals as its predecessor with players using a simple cursor and menu system to guide Rincewind on his journey. Kicking off with a "humourous" animated intro, which sets up the story, Discworld 2 basically consists of loads of simple click-and-point exploration and curious dialogue with the local population. At least, it starts off simply enough, but when you're sent off into the huge Discworld universe itself, it suddenly becomes a very daunting task indeed. Navigating around the game is accomplished via the traditional 'point and click' style of moving the cursor to wherever you want to go, then highlighting certain areas of the scenery, or people that look like they might come in handy. Hopefully you'll find a useful object to help you on your way, or some meaningful conversation will take place with one of the many exotic characters you encounter. Uncovering events is certainly half the fun.



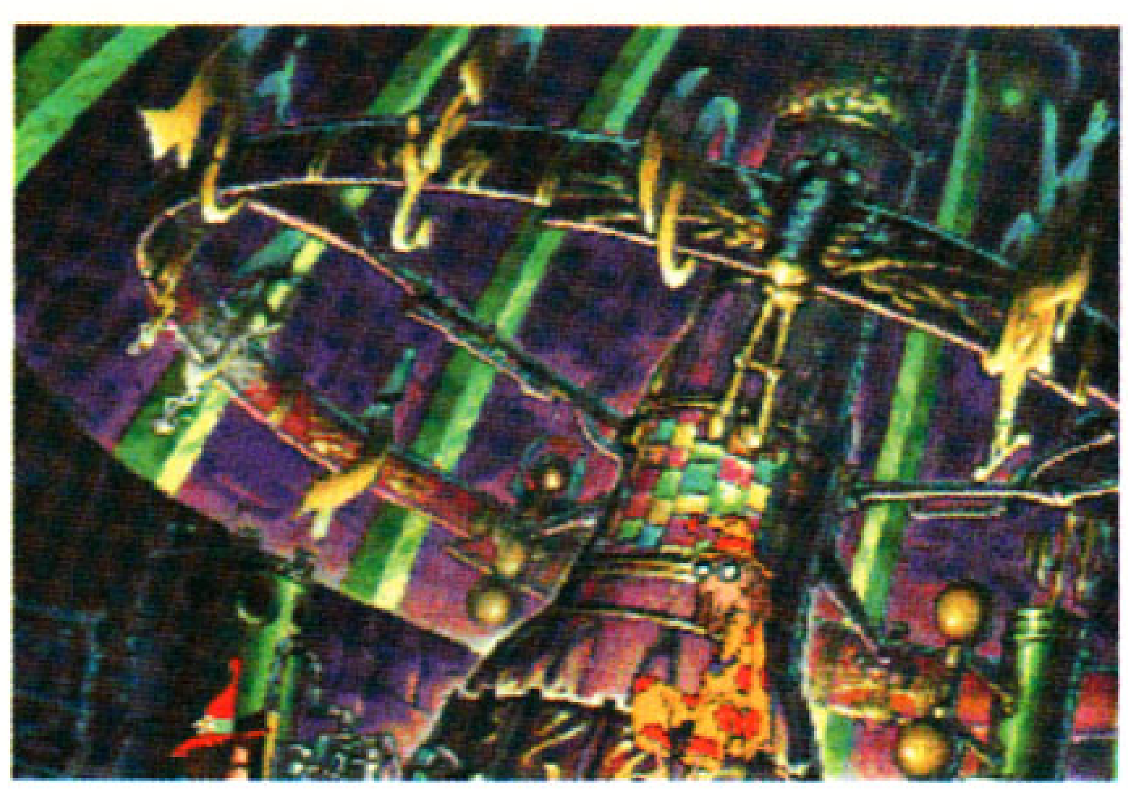


Here's the local pub, the Troll's Head, complete with miserable old men crying into their drinks and a very butch and scary landlord. If you think this looks bad, you should see the toilets!

But if you're looking for stimulating chat, Discworld isn't really the place to go - there must be something in the water which turns the normal, everyday folk into psychedelic, rambling hippies who will give you their observations on life, the universe and absolutely everything, whether you ask for it or not. And, thanks to the vocal talents of Eric Idle and various other minor celebrities, every character in Discworld 2 has plenty to say. Whether any of it is useful to your quest is debatable though, as the local inhabitants are more than happy to divert you by trading meaningless banter for hours on end. The option box that appears when you meet someone gives players the choice of having a normal chat, asking the person some questions or simply dismissing them with a cheeky remark. This does mean that there's plenty of depth to the game and many events to discover as you wander around and it certainly appears to be an absolutely massive challenge. The hero of this story also usually has something to say about most of the scenery and surrounding objects as well. So no-matter where you click the pointer, Rincewind will get on his soapbox and start giving lectures on every subject under the sun.

As with it's predecessor the graphics suit the subject matter - the whole game has a very cartoony feel, with some really well-drawn characters and a large number of equally impressive locations. Thanks to the real voices and witty conversation, fans of adventure games and the Pratchett novels should be more than happy with Discworld 2. So, considering the amount of calls and letters we receive here at SSM moaning about the lack of decent adventure/RPG's at the moment, Discworld 2 could well be a surprise hit with more cerebral Saturn owners. Stay tuned for a full review... soon.





ARCADE'S GREATEST HITS

Just like those groovy plimsoles and tracksuits from a few years ago, games which were once considered history are now back in demand and are the height of fashion with the youth of today. The latest cool revival is Midway's Arcade's Greatest Hits.

BY	WILLIAMS
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	VARIOUS
RELEASE	TBA



High scores became something of an obsession, in the old days!

Please don't turn the page - I know that the visual delights of Last Bronx and WipEout 2097 are nearby, whispering phrases like 'texture mapping' and 'frames per second' and trying to steal your attention away from this humble section of the magazine, but honestly, there's easily as much entertainment to be had from playing these crusty old games, despite their simple graphics. And if you haven't heard of Defender by now, I would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to planet Earth.

The big problem with all of these 'retro' compilations is that you've got to remember, just because a game is old, it doesn't automatically become a classic. They made crap games in the old days as well you know, and many retro compilations consist of one famous classic and a few other games from the same era that nobody really remembers to help fill the CD up. Arcade's Greatest Hits doesn't suffer from that problem. Well, it does a little bit, but you can't argue with the pedigree of games such as Robotron, Defender, Joust and Sinistar. The slightly-less-than-famous Defender 2 and the almost obscure Bubbles are on the disc, but the good-to-crap ratio is by far the best of all the retro compilations around at the moment (bar Sonic Jam of course). And once you start playing them, it's the classic gameplay and immense difficulty that surfaces. Also, the plots were usually cobbled together to fit the game rather than the game being created around a huge story - Bubble sees you steering a... bubble, around a sink, avoiding spiders and the plughole, and collecting crumbs. Don't ask about Joust, something to do with flying things and collecting eggs, but it's too weird for normal explanation.



Joust (above) is so surreal, it's a little bit frightening...

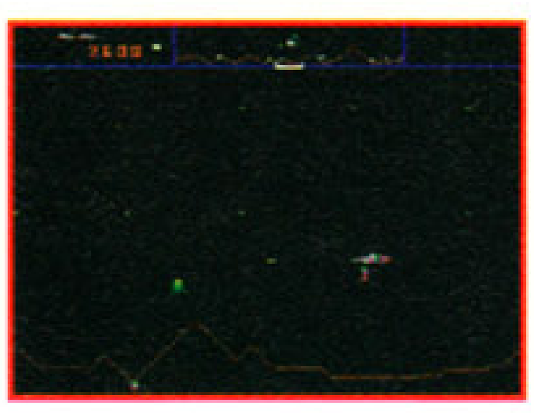
These games are tough - if you're tired of games you can complete in a couple of hours, and frustrated by premature completion of your latest purchase, then you need to try new, improved retro power. There's absolutely no question that games have got easier these days,

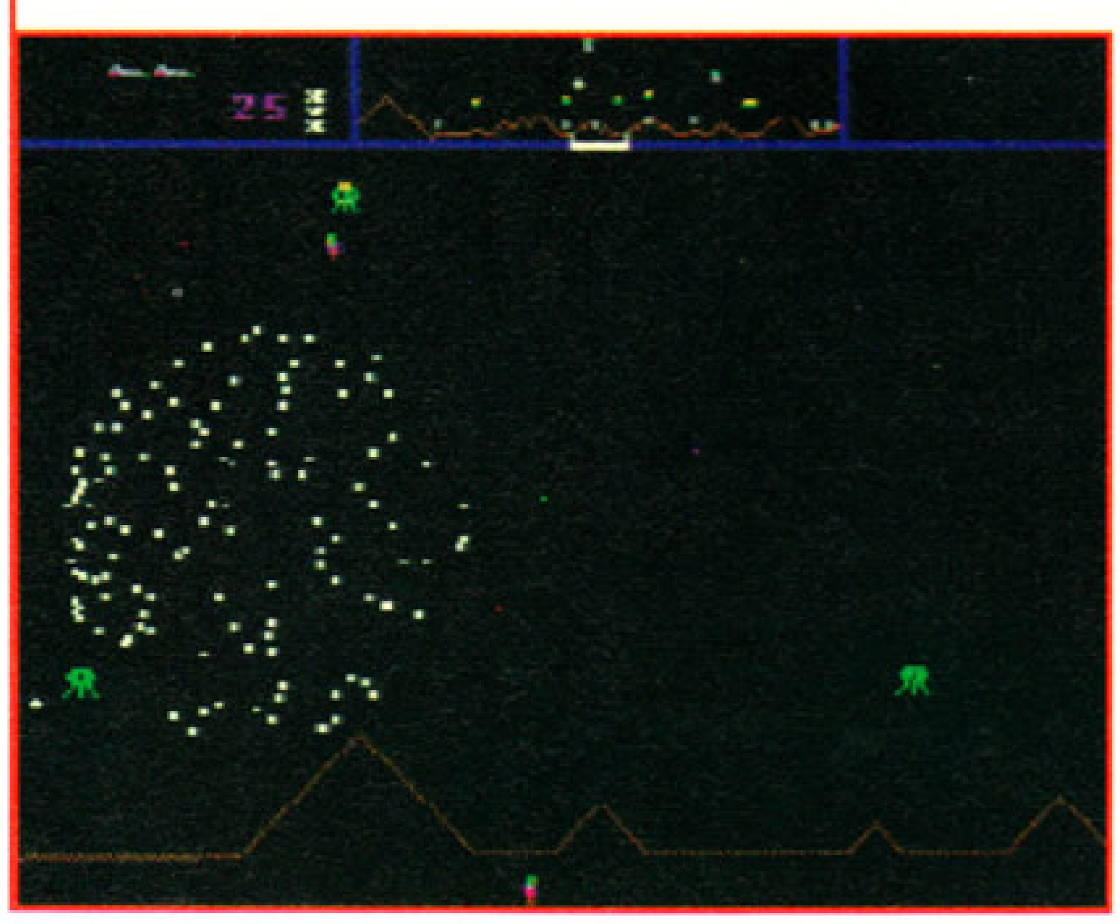
Just because a game is old doesn't mean it's any good. Fortunately, the selections on this compilation are all fine examples of the classic arcade genre.

THE PAST MASTER OF VAST DISASTER

The biggest and most famous game on this disc is definitely Defender. The original horizontally scrolling shooter first appeared in the arcades way back in 1980 - when you were still too short to reach the joystick - and it's remembered as one of the best games ever, and what do you know? It's perfectly recreated on the Saturn thanks to the wonders of emulation - as are all the other games on this CD - meaning that the Saturn is running the arcade c ode, not a reprogrammed version. These ARE the arcade games!





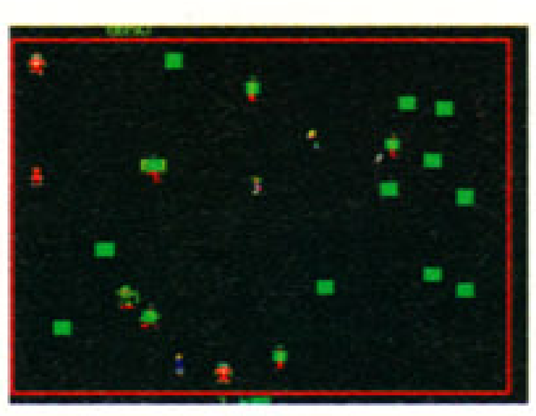




State-of-the-art graphics, circa 1982. Makes you think, eh?



More graphically stunted retro action above. This time it's 360 degree shooter Sinistar.



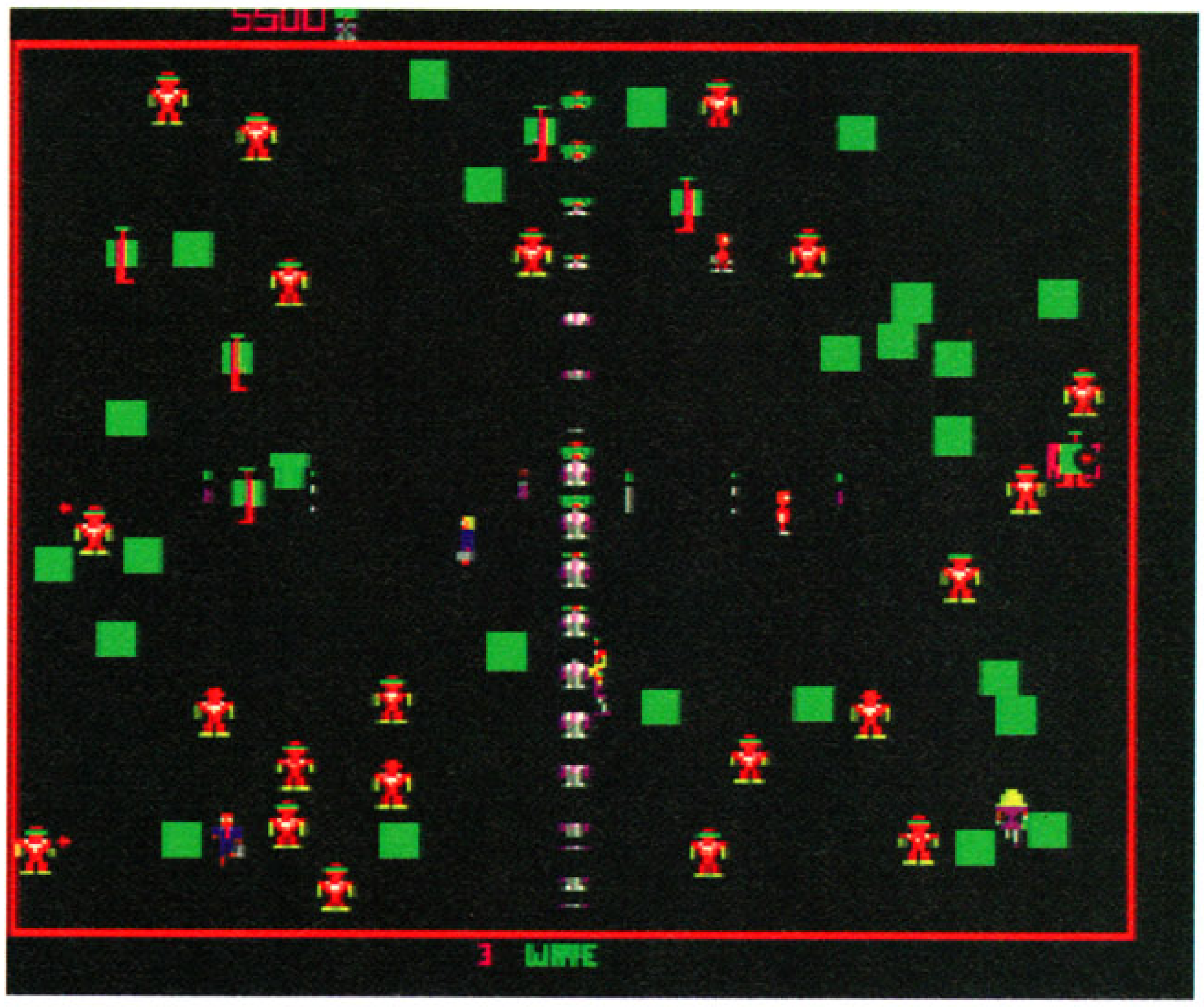


The VF3 Vs Robotron 'best graphics' debate was very short.



Surreal caption: collect crumbs and avoid falling down the plug.





There's no doubt that the 'one more go' factor is present here in bucketloads - I can't remember the last time a modern game had such a hold over it's players.

and historical proof is presented right here, by the incredibly difficult nature of every game on this CD. Do you get infinite continues? Bollocks you do - you're lucky if you get one extra life, let alone any continues or restart points, and if you want to get anywhere near the end of any of these classic titles, you'll really need to dedicate a serious chunk of your life to it.

The surreal and quite obscure Bubble is a good example - extra lives can be earned through racking up your score, and although you can make quite rapid progress through the levels, like most retro games

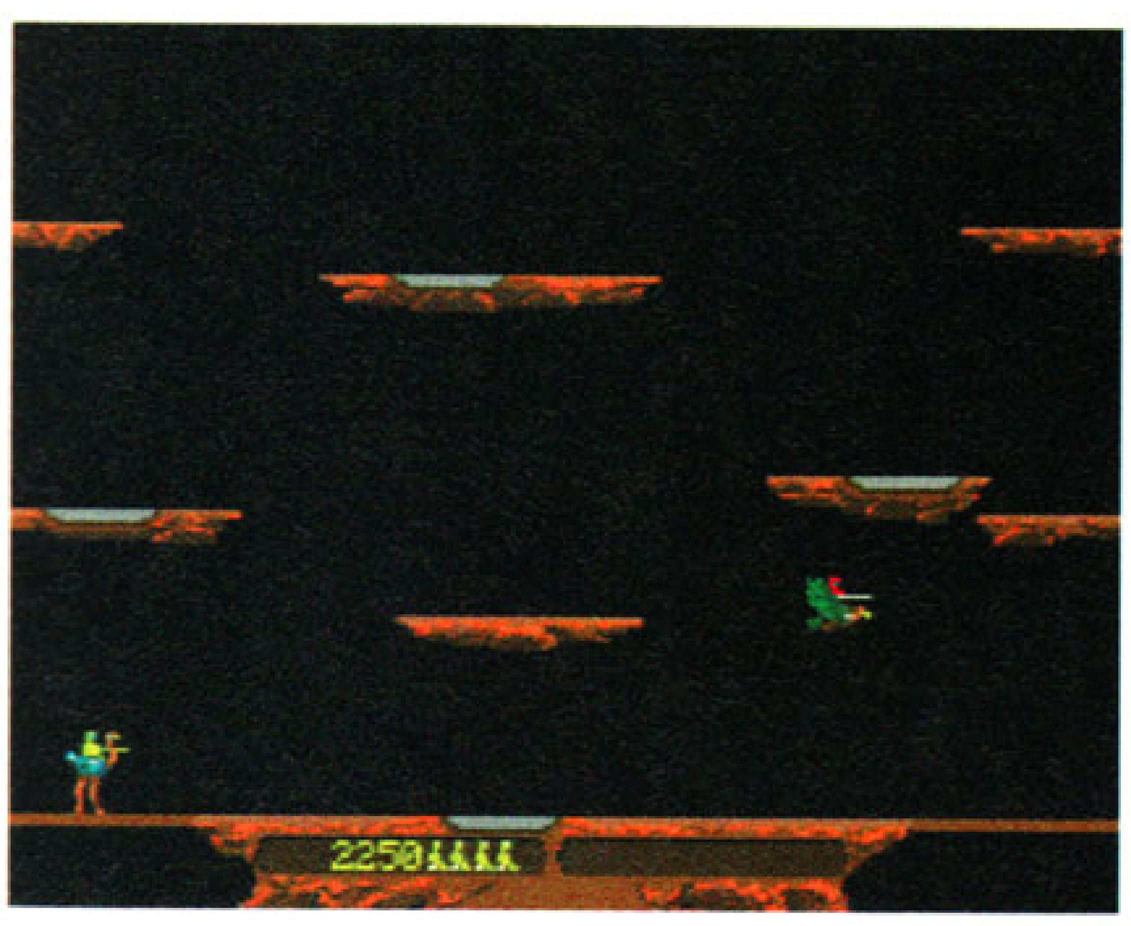


(Above) How can I possibly come up with an interesting caption for a game which involves steering a bubble around a sink?

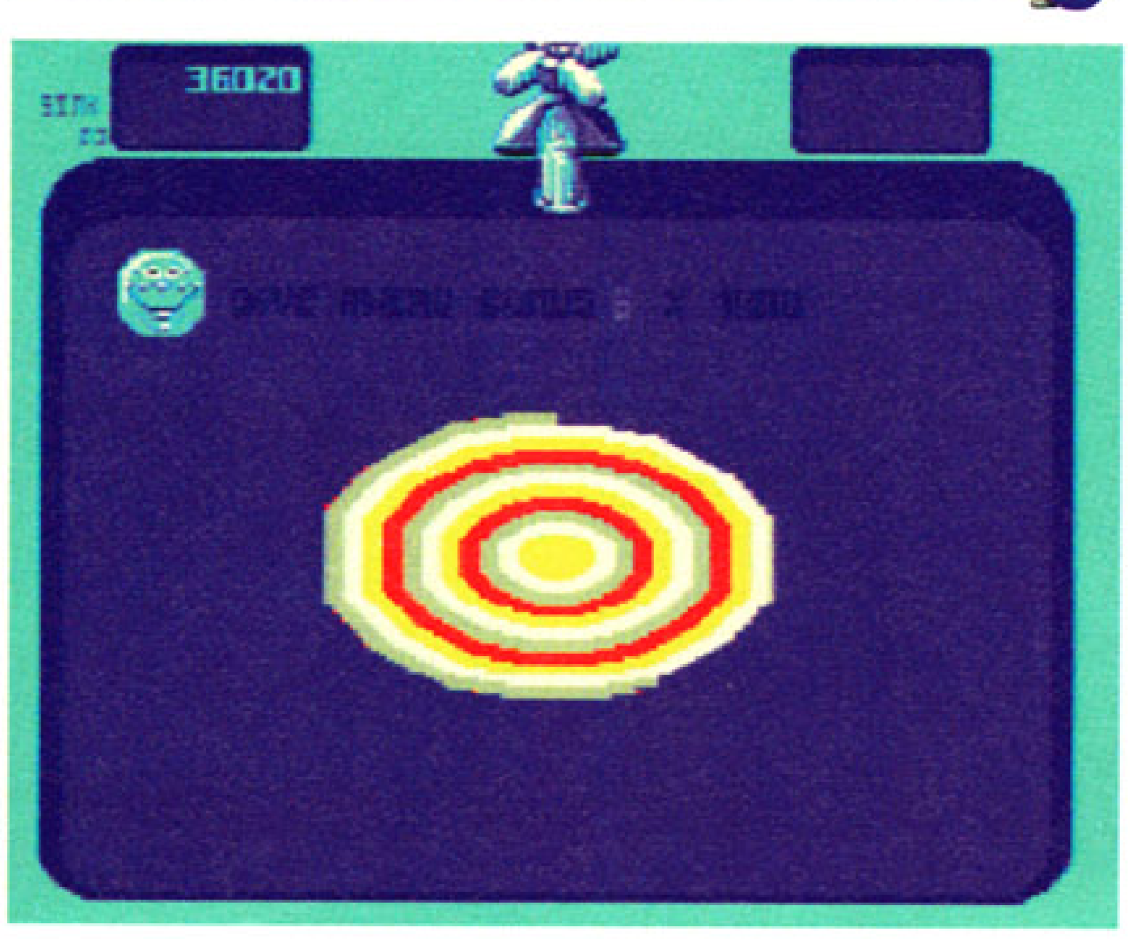
there doesn't appear to be a set number of levels, and the game seems to go on for ever, getting tougher and tougher. Defender, Robotron and Joust all have the same set-up - more baddies appear, faster baddies appear, badder baddies appear and it just doesn't stop. Ever. Sort of the Terminator of videogames. You WILL play Defender all night!

There's no doubt that the 'one more go' factor is present here in bucketloads - I can't remember the last time a modern game had such a hold over it's players. Instead of playing the game for half an hour to see the graphics and have a look at what it has to offer, the only reason to play these retro classics is if you REALLY want to. It's the only reason they exist. Graphics, fortunately, didn't matter in the old days too much, and as you can see from the various pictures around these two pages, it's a damn good job too! The words 'minimal' and 'functional' spring to mind, along with the word 'crap' which is perhaps a bit more accurate...

But that's missing the point. It's easy to get carried away with this 'retro' thing, and as I said before, just because a game is old doesn't mean it's any good. Fortunately, the selections on this compilation are all fine examples of the classic arcade genre, but as it's not yet clear if GT Interactive or anybody else will be releasing it over here, diehard retro-gamers had better find a decent import shop...



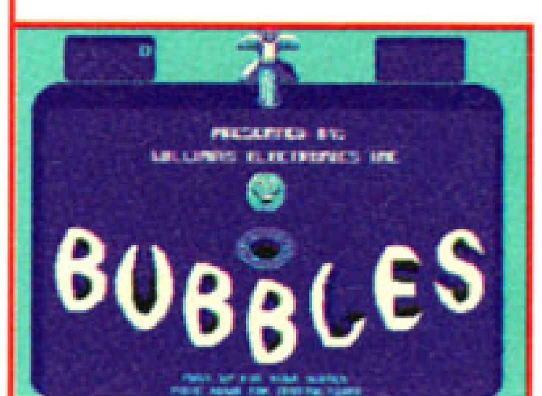
The Joust bird appeared in MK3 as Shang Tsung's Friendship.

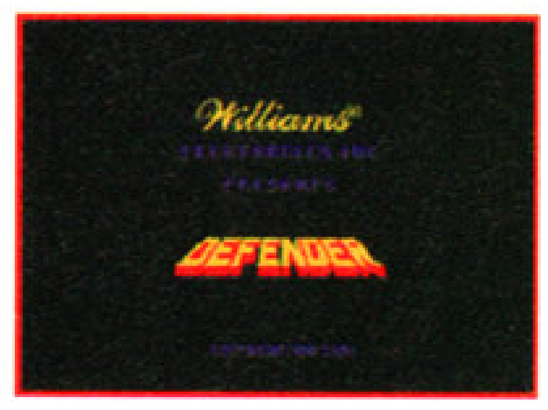


Look, don't laugh at these games, they're important history!

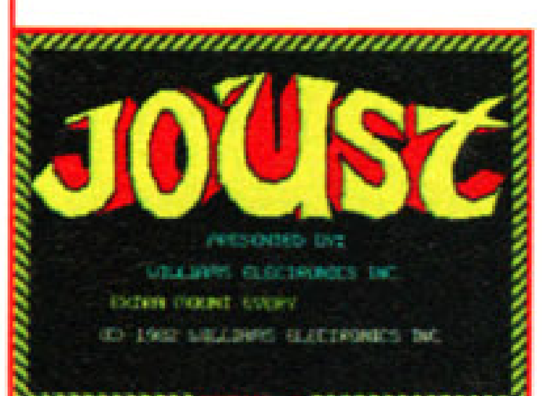
BACK ONCE AGAIN FOR THE RENEGADE BLASTER

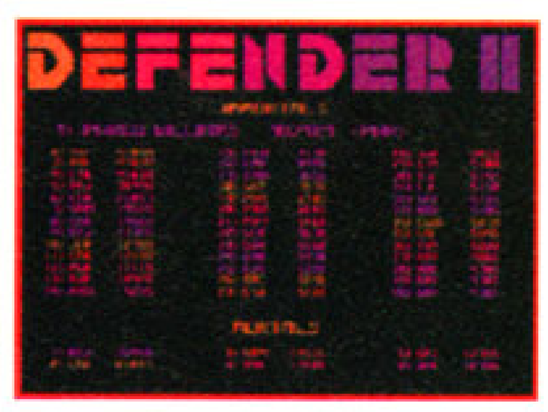
Normally, we would be whipped into a frenzy if we heard the phrase 'arcade perfect' being used when looking at a coin-op conversion, but when the arcade originals are so old and crusty in the first place, it's hardly surprising that the Saturn can perfectly replicate these old games with one processor tied behind its back - the Saturn probably uses more energy to run its internal clock! Presentation wasn't too hot in the old days either, but at least they're not in black and white...

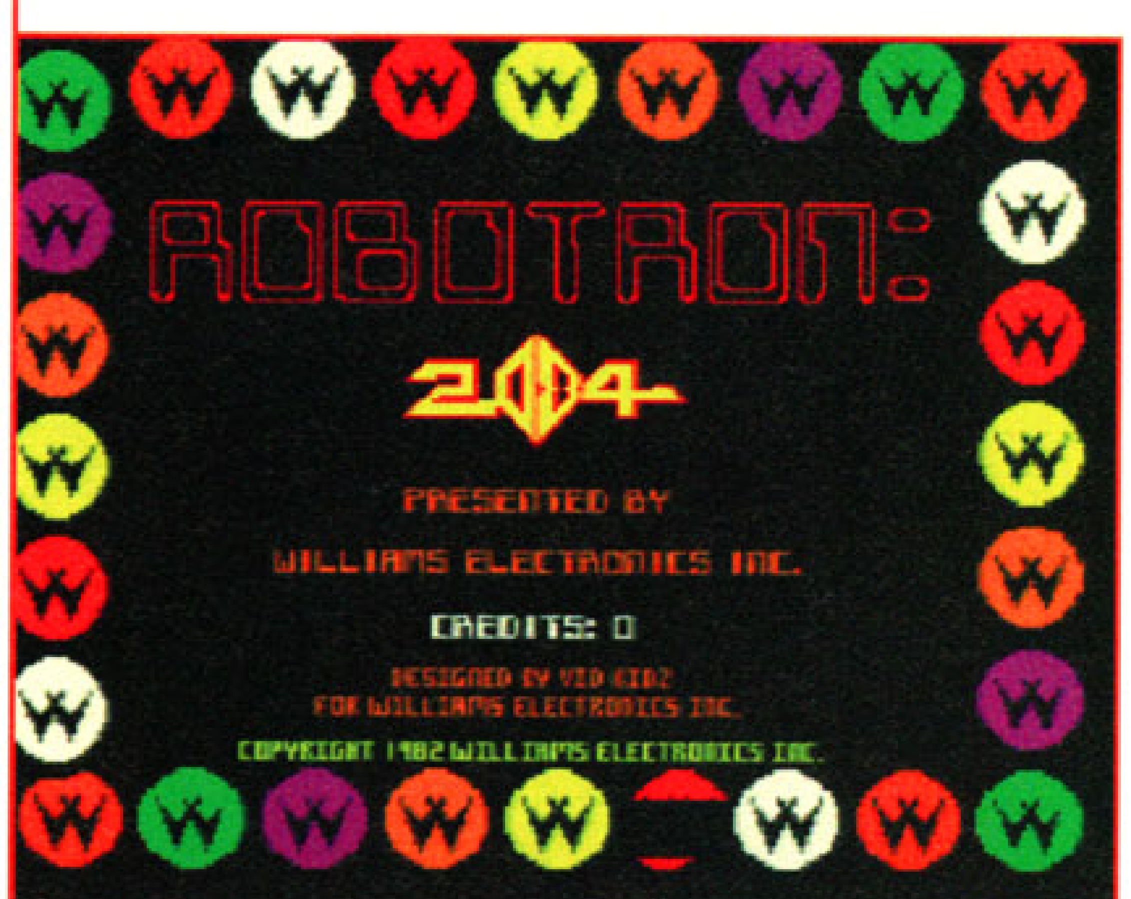




Forget rendered intros and fancy options, you're lucky to get a welcome screen and high score table in these games!





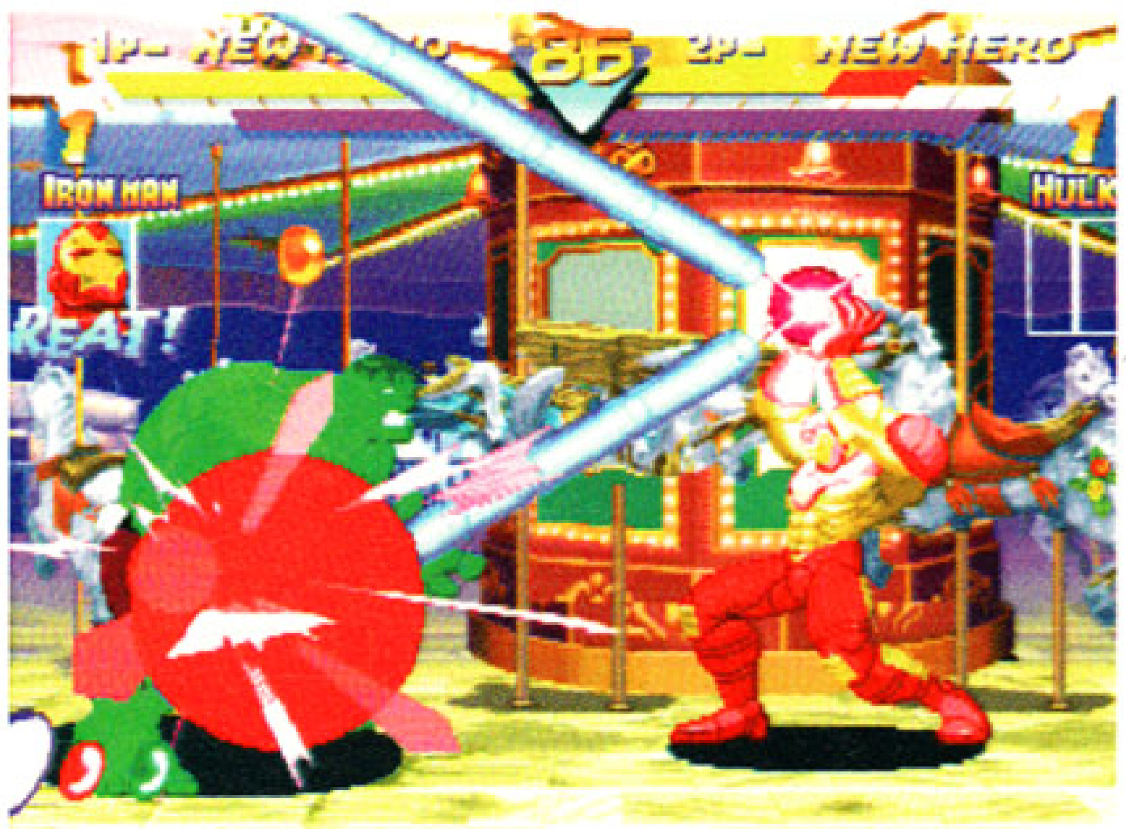


Pre-rendered cut scenes? Nope. Coloured blobs? Yes!

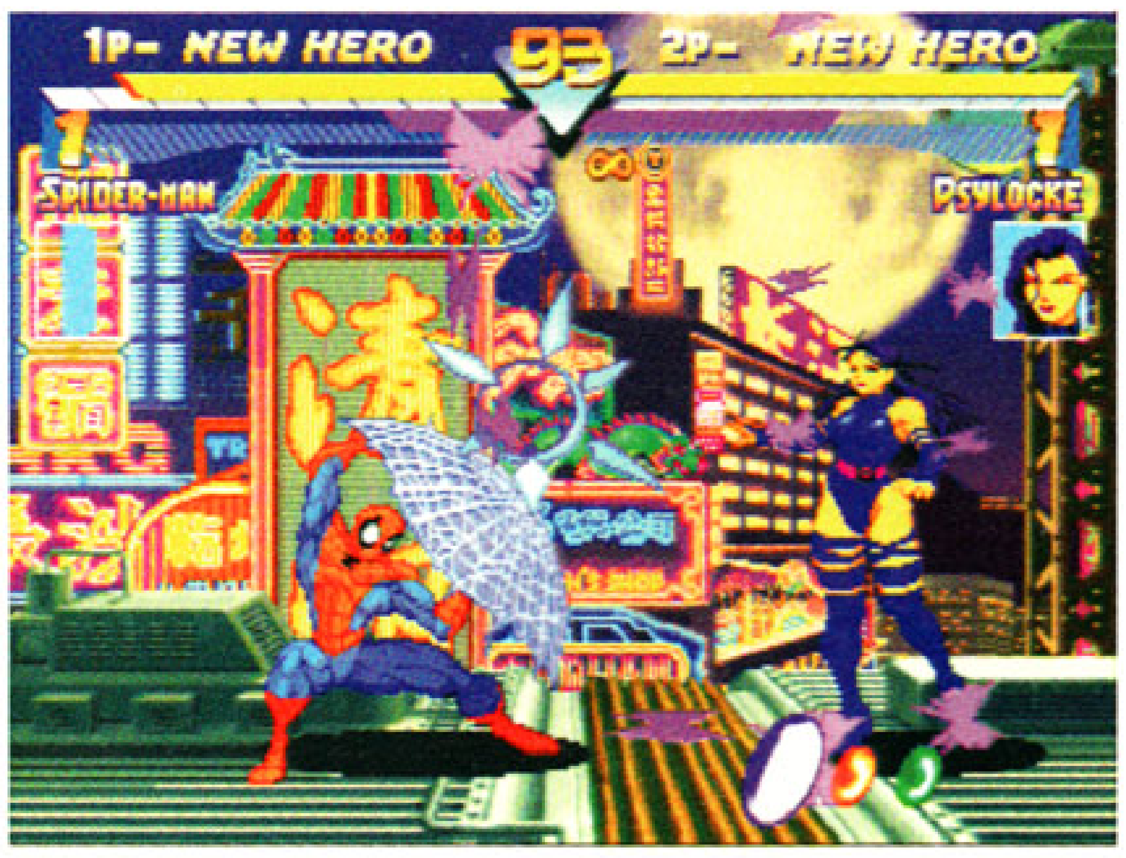
MARVEL SUPER HEROES

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE continues to get the best games first. We had Marvel Super Heroes exclusively last issue and guess what? We've got it again whilst our competitors haven't even seen it! How's that for service?

BY	CAPCOM
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	FIGHTING GAME
RELEASE	TBA



This Iron Man special move is especially cool. Like the game.



Psylocke's new X-Attack is blocked by the Amazing Spider-Man!



Just the other day, SSM's editor went out and bought X-Men: Children of the Atom. A games journalist BUYING a game? Whatever next? The reasons why are straightforward. Capcom fighting games are the best 2D examples of the genre by a huge margin and combined with Marvel's popular creations, the results are simply explosive! X-Men was (and is) a classic game and Marvel Super Heroes could even be better... providing it comes out over here.

Marvel Super Heroes has been a long time coming to the Saturn and one glance at the coin-op in action is enough to tell you why. Never before has Capcom's arcade CPS-II board ever been pushed as far this: there are a huge amount of sprite on-screen at any given time and these sprites are enormous! A Juggernaut versus Hulk confrontation is frankly titanic. Only the Saturn has the power to effectively render these sprites in all their glory on the home system. If you thought X-Men looked amazing, or you thrilled to the incredible action on DarkStalkers Revenge (aka Vampire Hunter), you ain't seen nothing yet!

Marvel Super Heroes is the most outrageous fighting game set in two dimensions and it's Capcom's finest hour graphically... and hugely entertaining in terms of gameplay too!

Just like X-Men: Children of the Atom, Marvel Super Heroes successfully captures everything that's so cool about the Marvel Comics characters. Capcom have taken the essence of these ace creations and rendered them in their amazing manga-style cartoon look, but over and above that, it's their moves and





Expect truly spectacular Marvel coverage in the next issue!



Marvel Super Heroes promises to be the greatest 2D fighter around with the Saturn pushed to its limits to recreate the coin-op classic!



Iron Man's Repulsor rays are powerful enough to send the Incredible Hulk flying.



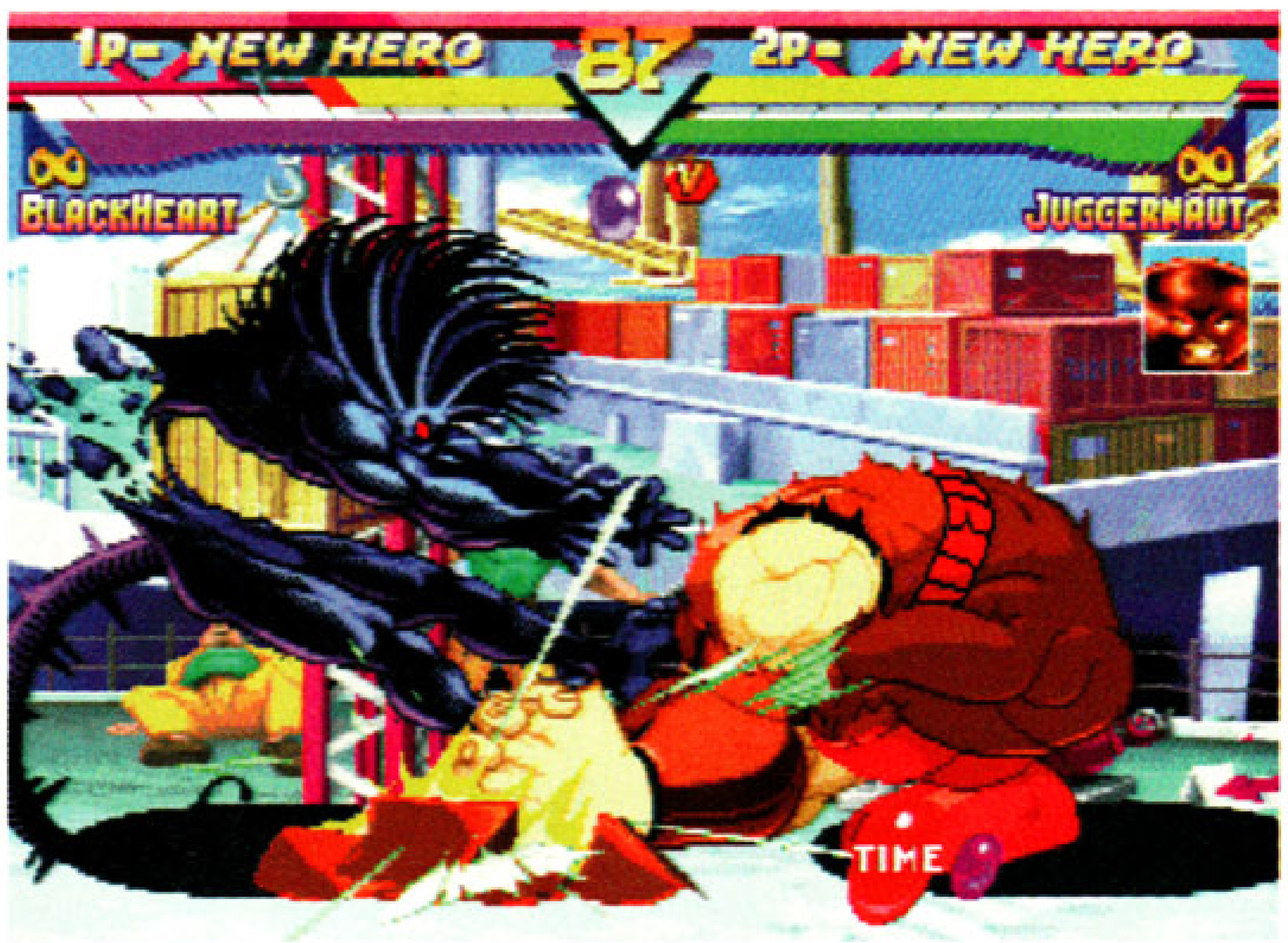
Wolverine produces his awesome Weapon X infinity attack on the cool Captain America.



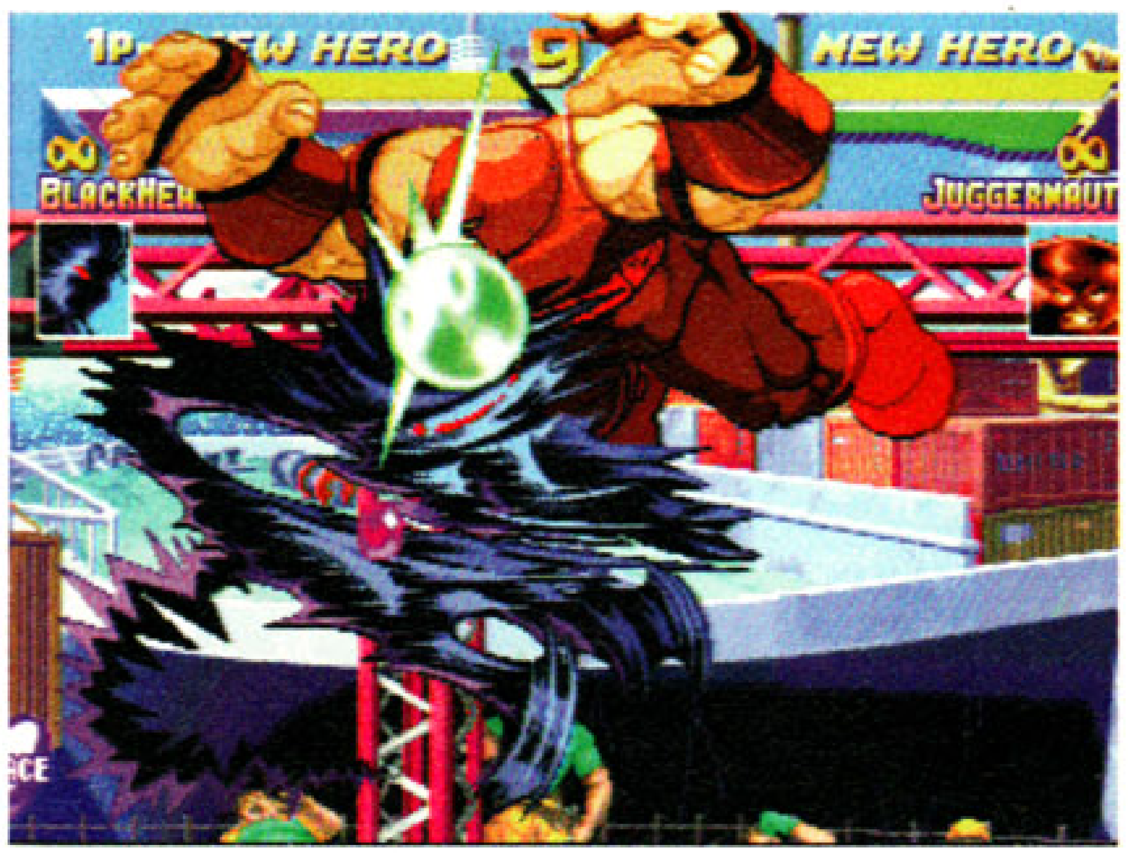




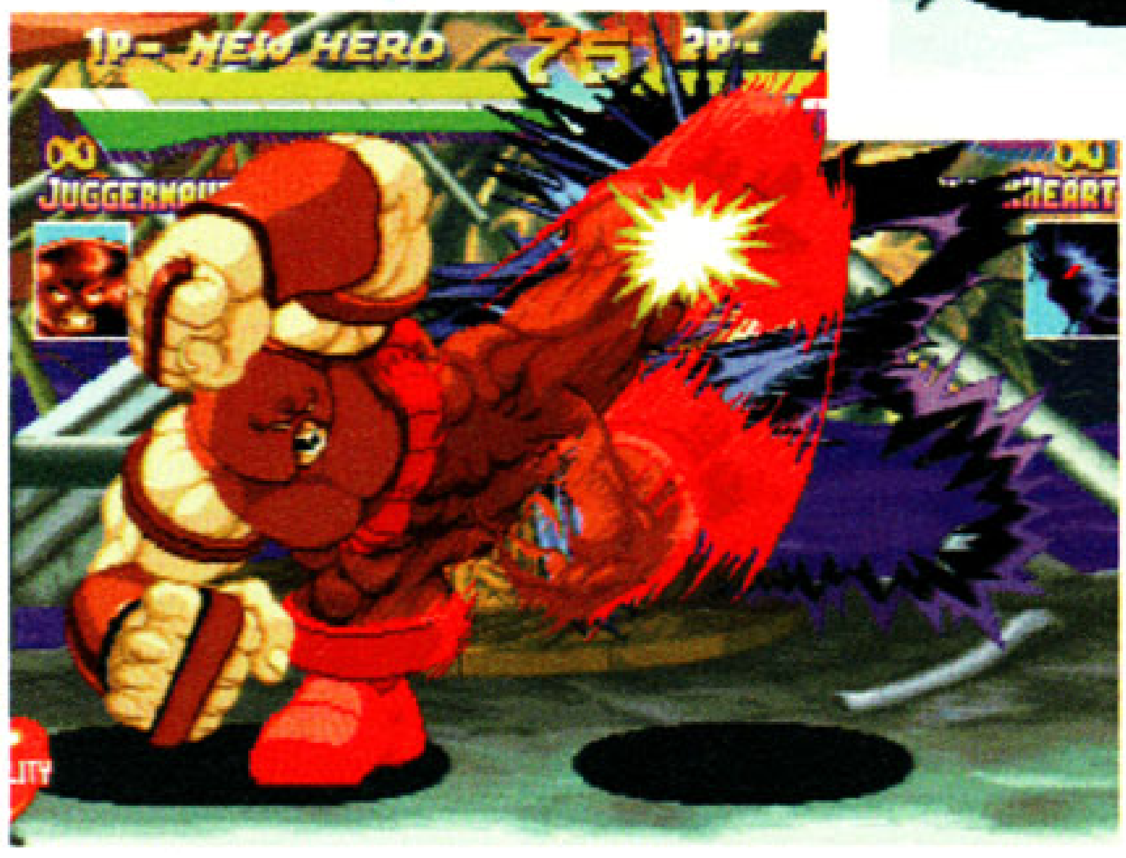
Characters like Shuma Gorath are what makes Marvel Super Heroes such a cool fighting game.



Tell us that these graphics aren't utterly amazing! You can't.



An example of the weirdness of the Capcom art in Marvel!



Look at the size of those sprites! Saturn Marvel is awesome!

their actions that make this game so cool.

Iron Man's weaponry - a tool for every occasion - is just like the comics. Spider-Man's limbs moving so fast they're a blur... the Hulk ripping up the ground and chucking it at his opponent... Wolverine's unbridled ferocity... even the victory speeches are all in character (Captain America's "Thumbs up soldier!" springs to mind). This game is just too cool for words.

We mentioned the gameplay earlier, and in this respect Marvel Super Heroes is a winner as well. Street Fighter Alpha 2 is the ultimate masters' fighting game with the emphasis in technique. The gameplay in Marvel Super Heroes (and indeed X-Men) is a lot looser,





Shuma Gorath's Super positively molests the hapless Psylocke.

allowing beginners to get the most of these cool characters. However, the Create-A-Combo system allows experts to pull off some frankly stunning combos - in the air and on the ground.

Capcom have continued their tradition for awesome Super Attacks as begun in X-Men. The mutants retain their X-Attacks (although a few have been added) whilst the other heroes and villains have Infinity Attacks which look so amazing they're frankly senses-shattering! Witness Spidey dart around the screen, smacking hell of his foe with the Maximum Spider attack! Behold Iron Man's enormous Proton Cannon blast the stuffing out his foes! Cower in terror at Magneto's Magnetic Tempest! Gasp at Captain America's Final Justice!

As you can no doubt tell by now, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE is most excited indeed about Marvel Super Heroes. It's one of those games that despite being 2D blows away everyone who sees it... and indeed plays it. It's that good.

By the time the next issue is being put together, the game will be on the shelves in Japan (and available via your importer), so expect SSM to give you unrivalled coverage of this game as well as "the skinny" on whether the Saturn translation lives up to the power of its arcade predecessor! Stay with us!

CART CONTROVERSY

The early versions of Saturn Marvel Super Heroes run exclusively using a memory cartridge (as used in the SNK games and available ONLY in Japan) that boosts the Sega machine's internal memory to 3.5 megabytes! The problem is, Sega Europe have no plans of releasing the cart and it's highly unlikely that Virgin Interactive will release the game with the cart (which they'd have to buy from Sega).

So where does this leave Marvel Super Heroes? If the cart is required, this leaves the entire release of Marvel in Europe in question, unless Sega buy up the game as they have with Resident Evil.

It may be that a cut-down version of the game which runs without the cart will appear (like the heavily cut PlayStation version which has tons of the coin-op animation missing). Remember: Capcom's Cyberbots runs with or without the extra memory, so fingers crossed, eh? At the time of writing it's still on Virgin's release schedule and we'll keep you posted.



Slowly but surely a library of quality software that uses the Japan-only RAM cart is becoming evident. Metal Slug (pictured) would make a brilliant UK release but needs the cart!

PREVIEW

QUAKE

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE has followed this one right from the beginning with awesome coverage jealously coveted by our "competition". And here we are again with more EXCLUSIVE Quake activities!

BY	SEGA/LOBOTOMY
PRICE	£TBA
STYLE	FIRST PERSON SHOOTER
RELEASE	OCTOBER

PLAYSTATION QUAKE? HA!

Interesting rumours have begun to emanate concerning the status of the PlayStation Quake. If they're true it would seem to indicate that the Sony machine isn't going to receive any kind of version of id's wondergame with the only other console translation being the N64 version... which won't appear until 1998! The same source alleges that multiple developers attempted to port the PC code to PlayStation with little success, vindicating Lobotomy's decision to use their own engine on the Saturn version. So while PlayStation gets Tomb Raider 2 and we don't, Saturn owners get a conversion of the best PC title ever! If these rumours are true (and our source is very good) we think that Sega should make a BIG thing about it: ads in the PlayStation mags with screenshots of the amazing Saturn translation plus comments from the press about the awesome nature of the conversion! Sales of Saturns should shoot up!







No-one has seen anything of Quake since the game's first demo was released by Lobotomy Software three months ago... until now! The Saturn 3D ubermeisters released an all-new update of the game to their paymasters at Sega and less than 24 hours later, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE was there to check out the latest work on this most anticipated of conversions!

Although I (Rich) have no doubts about the quality of Lobotomy's work, the previous demo (which we showed totally EXCLUSIVELY) raised a lot of questions about the final version. The big question of course, concerned the inclusion of 3D monsters into the equation. At the time of the first demo, everyone was amazed at how fast and smooth Saturn Quake was... almost as swift as Exhumed with very little modifications to the engine DESPITE the huge increase in lighting effects and polygons. Could this speed survive with the inclusion of enemies?

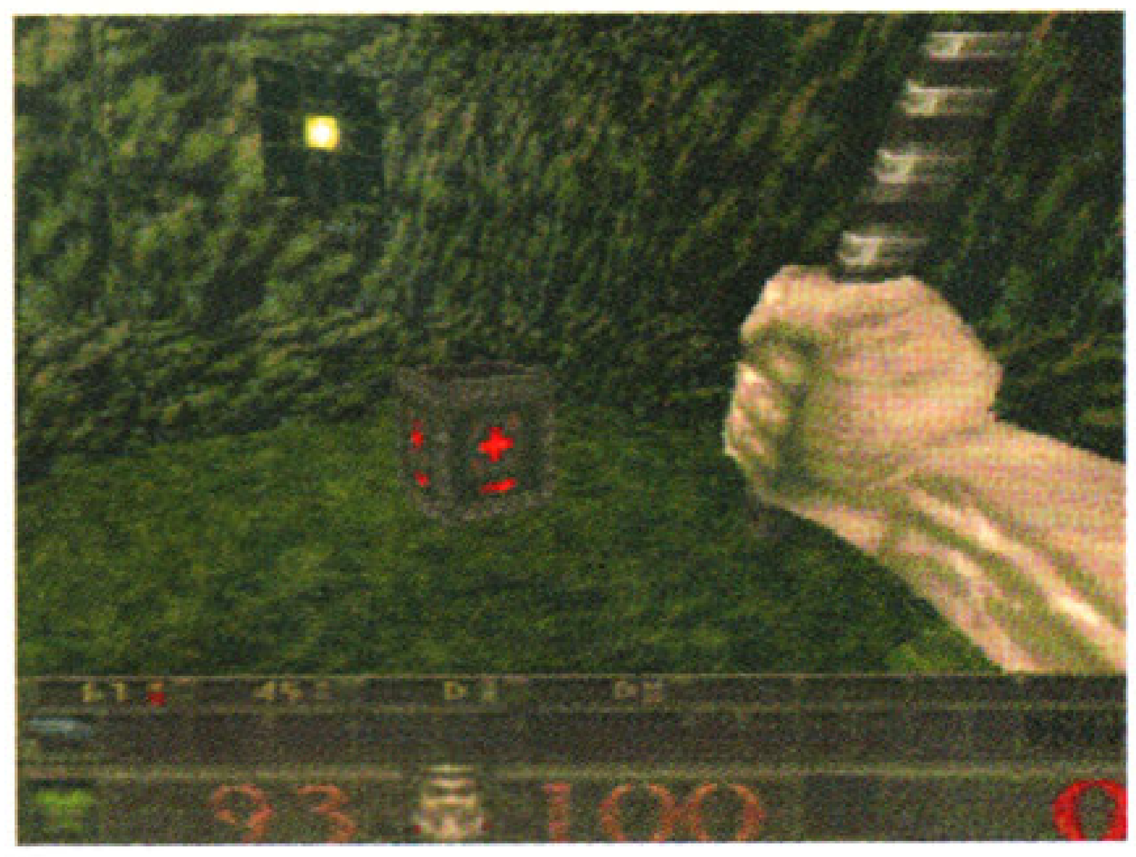
Secondly, Lobotomy's initial work only covered the introduction level and the first stage of the first episodes (in finished Quake there are four episodes, each with roughly eight levels apiece). How would Lobotomy cope with the HUGE open levels that required tons more polygons?

So yes, despite my faith in Lobotomy I was still unconvinced, especially considering the worries of id software's 3D Programming God, John Carmack (see SSM's #19 and #20 for all his comments). This new version, although still far from finished would allow me to answer all of these questions. And how! Prepare for hardcore information!

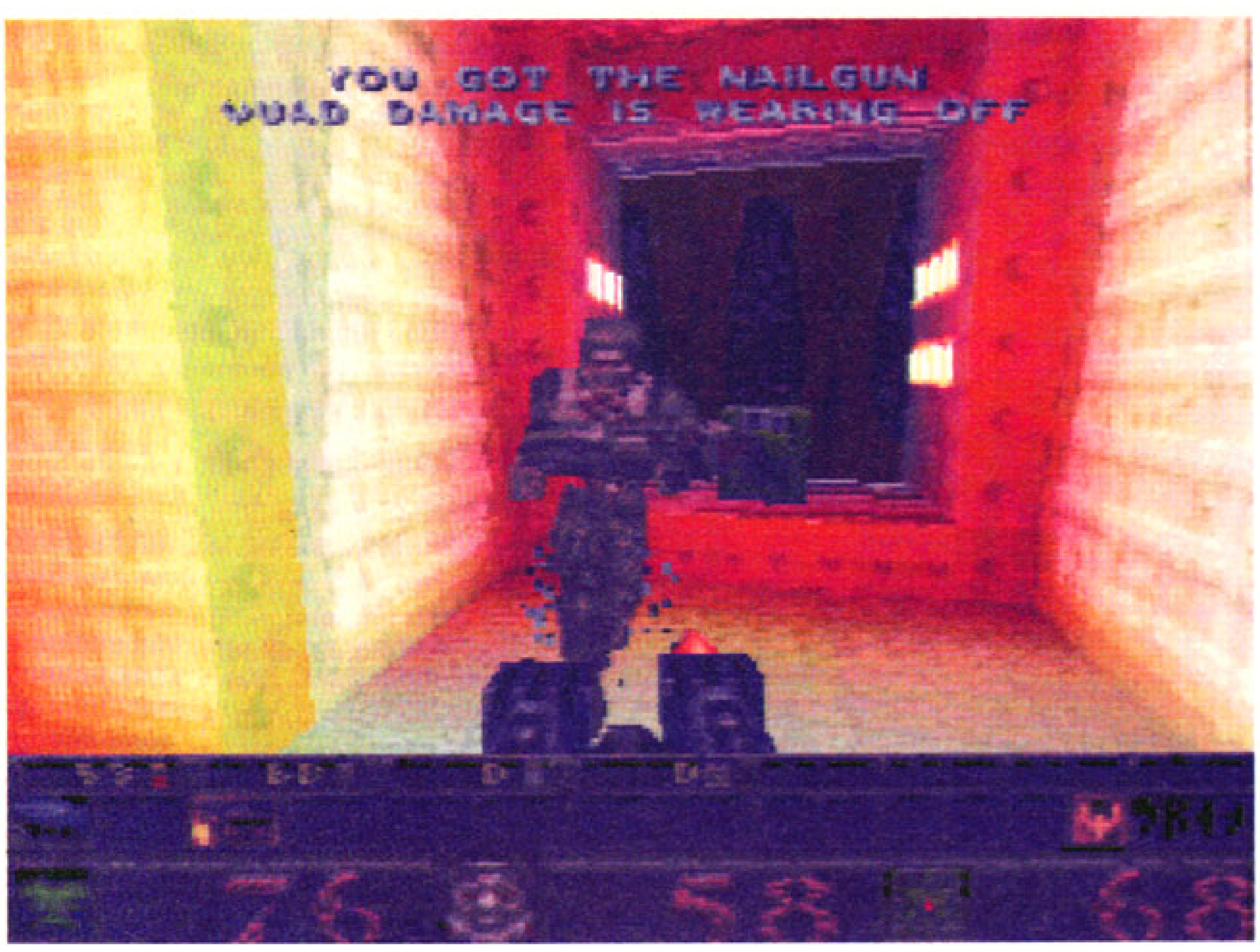




Even the inter-level panoramic views are included (right).



No matter how detailed the 3D levels the Saturn more than keeps up to speed! Despite the detail it's far, far smoother than Doom and Hexen!



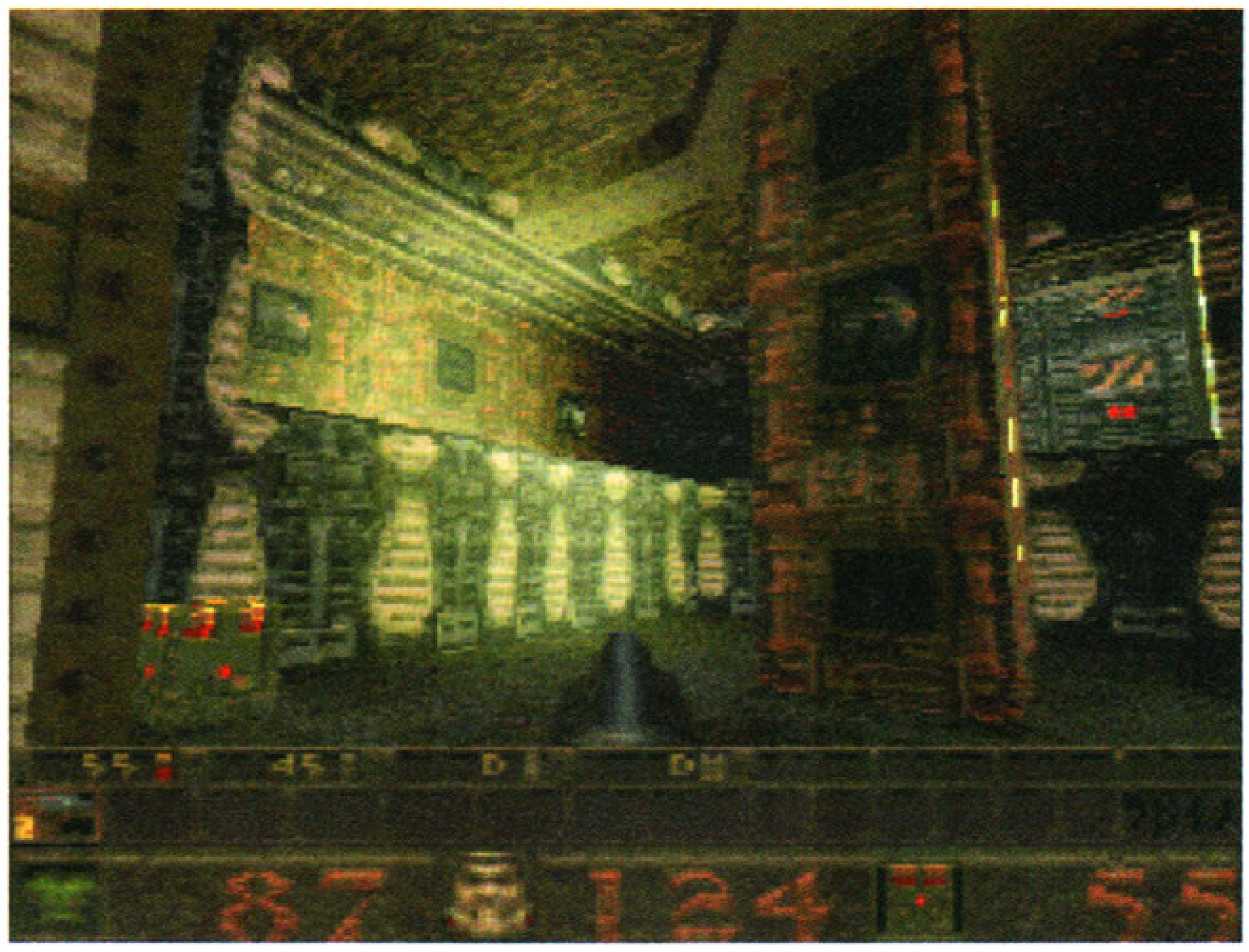
When the weapon lighting merges with Quad Damage lighting you get this awesome effect.



The body suit is very detailed (right) and here are three meanies... and NO SLOWDOWN! Rejoice!


A rocket blast sends a soldier flying! Amusing.


Ogre Chainsaw versus Nail Gun! I won.


Lighting was temporarily removed, but it's back - and how!


The Quad Damage lighting is superior on the Saturn version, compared to the PC! And look at the detail on the enemy soldier! Cool!




The monsters are in and the speed is still unbelievably good.

Take a good hard look at the awesome visuals of Saturn Quake - a game that's rumoured to be canned on PlayStation! Feel the Power!

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

The first thing I noticed on the conversion was a slight reduction in the amount of lighting effects going on compared to the original demo. Apparently those effects (such as the red glow on the Slipgates) were pretty heavy on the frame rate so they were temporarily removed until the monsters had been sorted out. Curiously enough, the game looked a bit closer to the PC original because of it. However, the later E3 version showed that all of the lighting effects (and more) had returned. And still the smoothness remains superb!

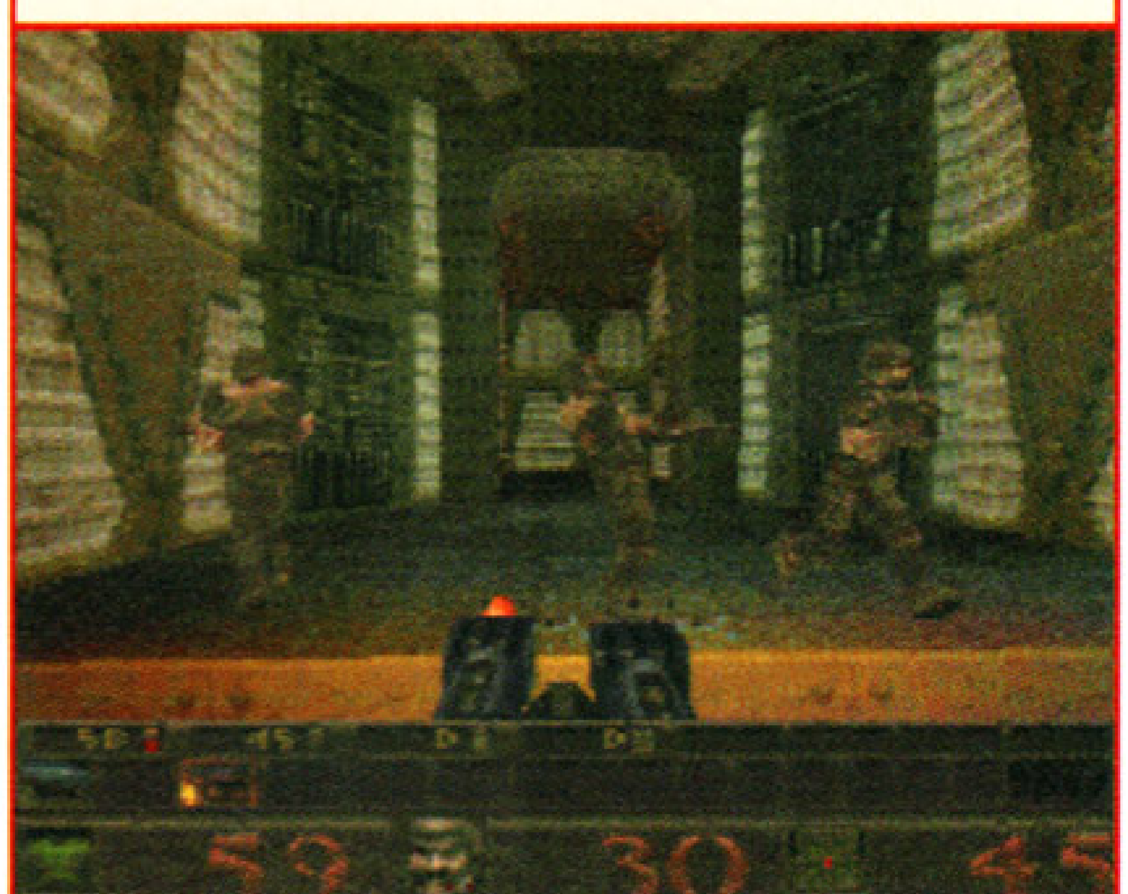
INTO EPISODE ONE!

Entering the first level proper of the conversion, we were confronted with the obligatory monsters! First impressions: awesome! As Lobotomy promised, they're full 3D affairs with all the animation of the PC renditions in place. Although exploding them into bloody chunks was not available (yet) and their intelligence not right, it appears that our faith in Lobotomy's skills has been justified.

Power-ups such as Quad Damage (the greatest collectible in the history of videogames) are all in and >>

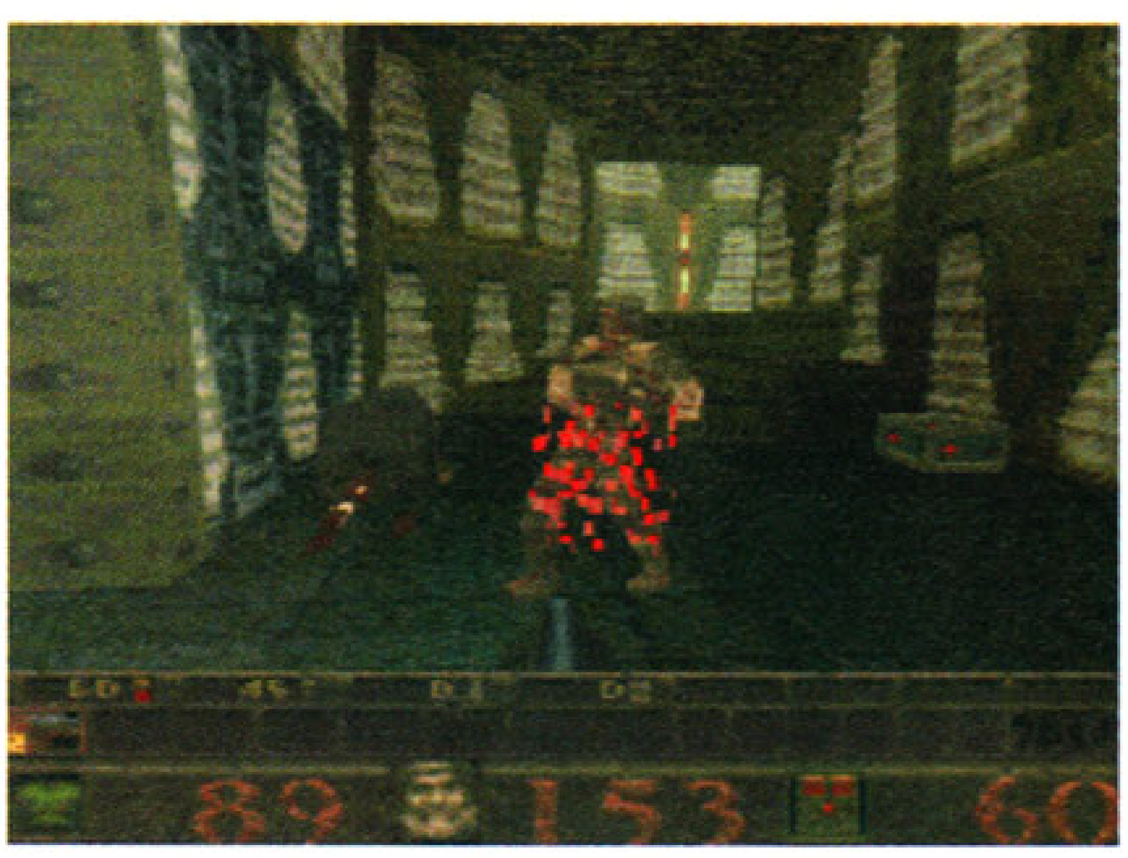
THE SLOWDOWN QUESTION

With the monsters in and working in a rudimentary fashion, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE decided to put one of Lobotomy's claims to the test, that being that the inclusion of 3D enemies WOULDN'T slow the game down. So, putting on God Mode for invincibility we wandered around a level getting three soldiers to follow us about. Manoeuvring them into position so all of them were on screen, we then set about judging if the overall speed had been compromised. In a word: no. Everything seemed to be as smooth as ever! Lobotomy appeared to have lived up to their own hype and I felt almost ashamed to have questioned their power!

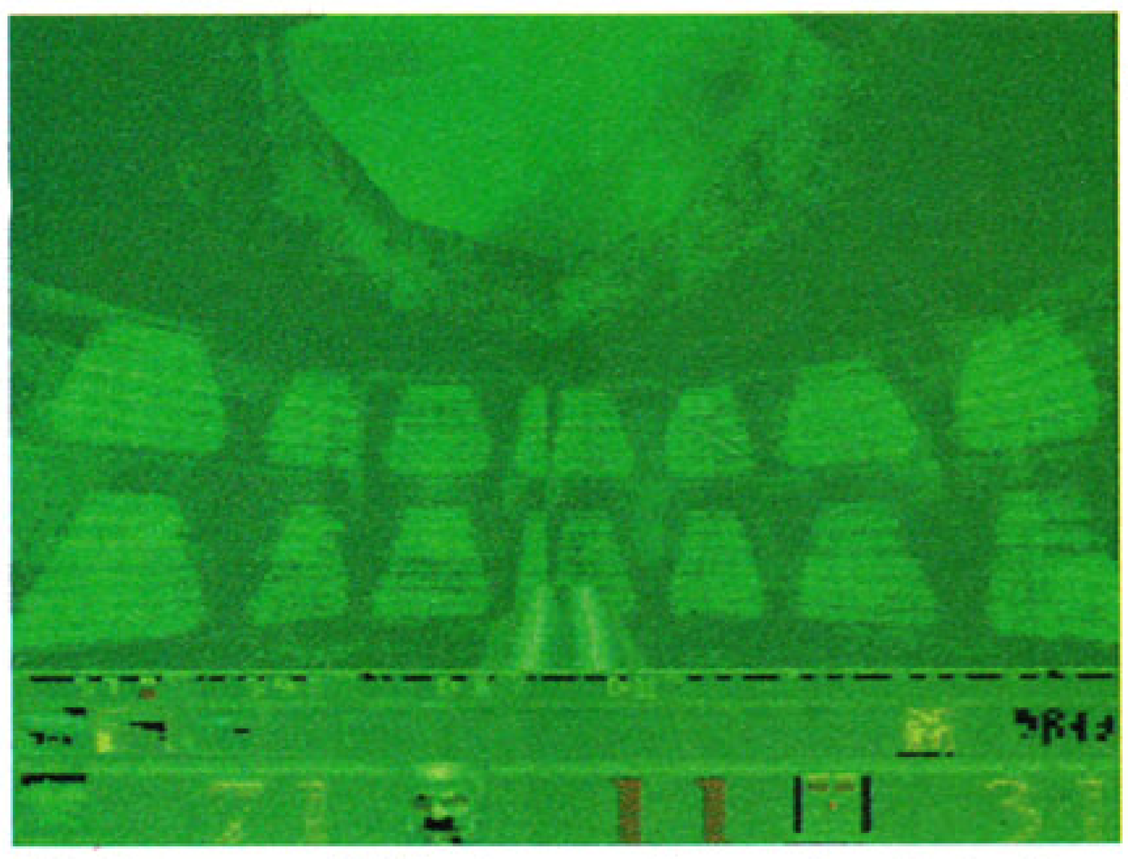





Three zombie soldiers face up for some punishment (top). Then they're gunned down like stinking peegs (below left).

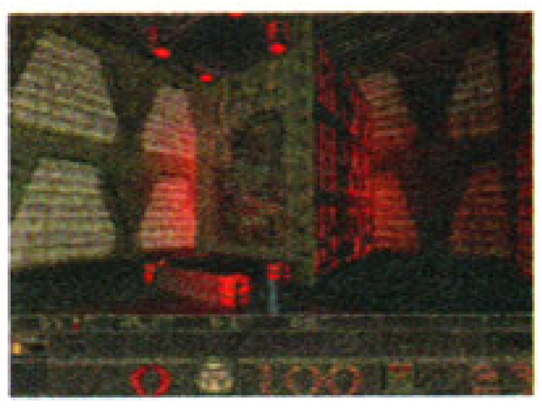

A rampaging hound and soldier take on our hero. DIE!!!


Quad Damage ThunderBolt power: all meanies DIE instantly!



This bizarre green lighting happens when you don a bodysuit.





The introduction level: choose your skill level and episode.

WHAT'S LEFT TO DO?

So... half the levels are designed, the monsters are looking good. Quake's almost done, yes? No. The latter levels are going to be difficult to redesign on Saturn (being even more grandiose than Episode Two's!), the enemy intelligence has to be sorted out and the keys and locked doors need to be sorted out. In addition, switches and what-have-you that you nudge in the PC version have to be shot at the moment, which won't do. Also, Lobotomy have promised a completely reconfigurable control system, which I applaud mightily. The current Exhumed system is good, but we really need a "freelook" system - basically the analogue pad is needed to look around with forward, backward, strafe left and strafe right required to be mapped to the buttons. A similar system is used in N64 Turok and it's just about the only way to convert across PC Quake's mouse and keys arrangement - you've got to be able to look around and move simultaneously. So you see, there's still tons to do before Quake's October release...







Some menacing action from E1M1 - where your quest begins!

» working and the weapons are all in the right places.

Regular SSM readers may remember that I mentioned the slight reworking of some of the levels in the Saturn translation. Well, I can report that this has been kept down to a minimum. The later levels of Episode One are just about perfect - a lot closer than the rendition of the first stage. This is surprising considering how ambitious the later levels are. Which leads me nicely onto...

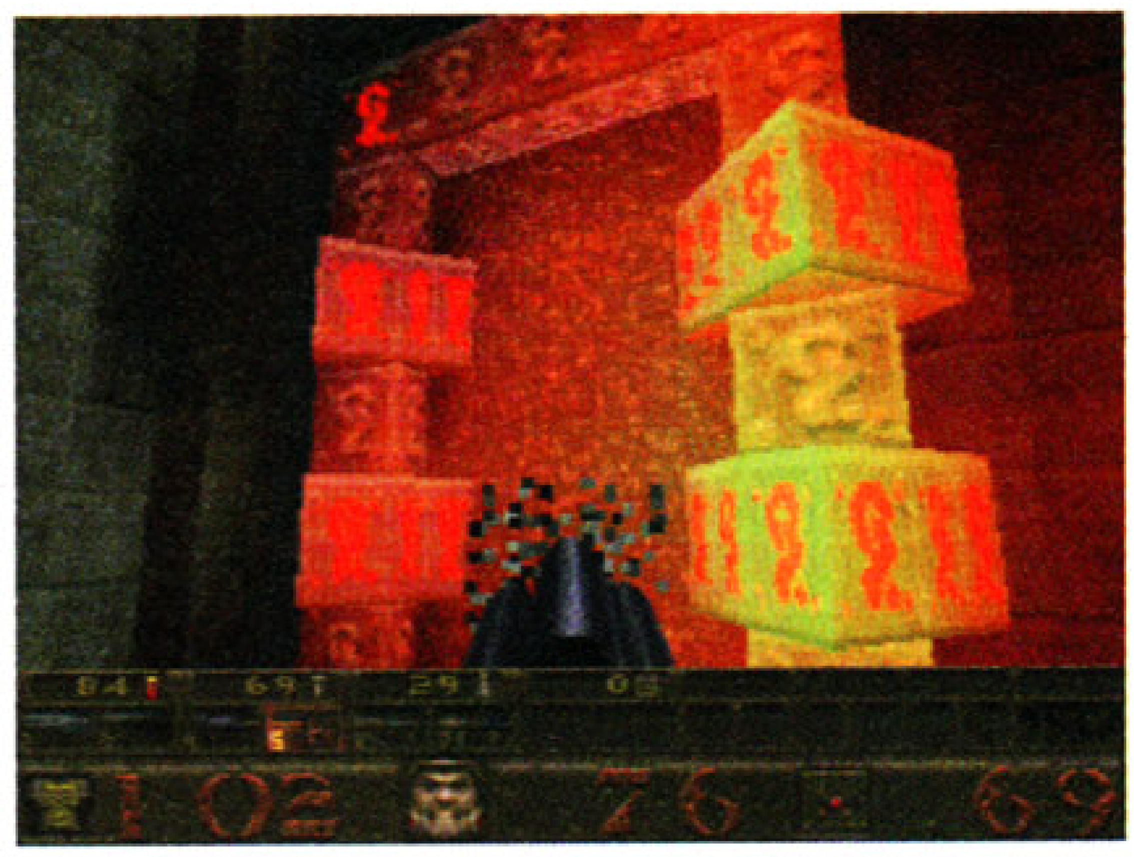
LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THESE THINGS!

The corridor game genre is so-called because rendering enclosed spaces in 3D is much easier to do than vast open areas. Now, Quake has A LOT of vast, open areas! In fact, this caused quite a few problems for Lobotomy, who had to redesign portions of their SlaveDriver engine in order to cope with the vastly increased polygon count inherent with such a concept.

The later levels of the first Episode of Saturn Quake are virtually identical geographically to the PC version, no matter how big or indeed open the area is. I can't stress enough how supremely impressed I was by this, and just goes to show how stunted and absurd Saturn Doom and even Hexen are. I've taken some prize screenshots to emphasis this aspect of the game. Lobotomy have taken this problem to task effectively, so there are no "misting effects" or ugly polygon pop-up. Once again, hats off to the 3D masters!

THE REAL SURPRISE!

Sega had barely looked at Saturn Quake before I arrived to inspect Lobotomy's latest work and it was



believed that only the first Episode had been translated. I thought "what the hell" and attempted to enter the second Episode... I almost exploded in pleasure as the first level of Episode Two appeared!

On the PC, Episode One was the shareware version: the bit of the game you got for free, a taster if you will. The other three episodes are where the engine is really put through its paces, so viewing the Saturn equivalents of some of these stages would really answer some questions!

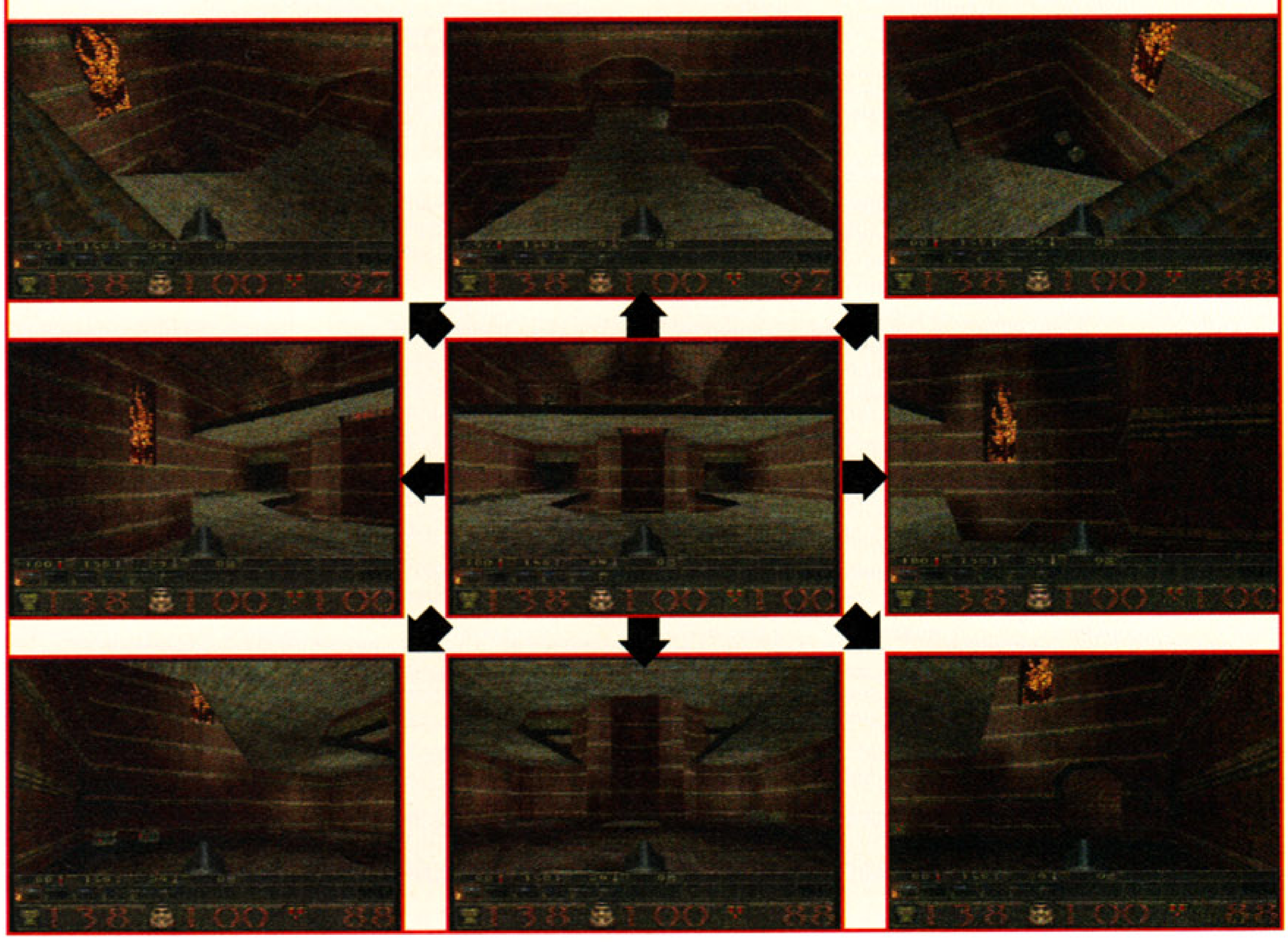
MY GOD: IT'S AMAZING!

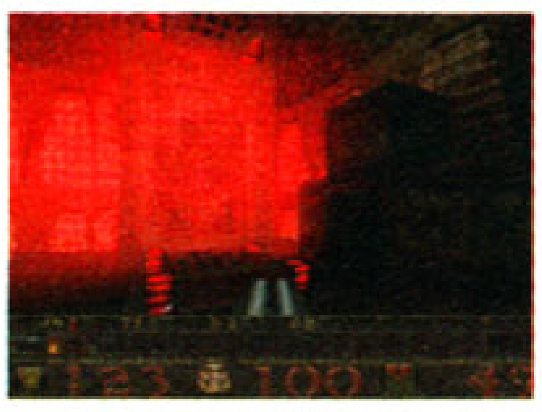
The first Episode was stunningly close to the original... and despite the increased level of complexity in Episode Two, the game remains just as fast and just as authentic. It's here that the graphics take a turn from the amazing to the unbelievable!

Work is progressing nicely with only six weeks' coding to go! We guarantee this will quite simply blow your mind! Way to go, Lobotomy!

THE FREELOOK ISSUE

Quake takes part in a 3D world quite unlike any other (although Exhumed comes close). Whereas Doom and Duke Nukem 3D levels are a "strip" of corridors, Quake has rooms above rooms, an effect id software used to devastating effect in their level design. To give you a flavour of what we mean, here are nine screenshots in a three-by-three arrangement. The centre one is your original view, with the shots around it showing the 3D geography around your current position. Impressive eh? Well that's why being able to look around independently of movement in Quake is so vital!





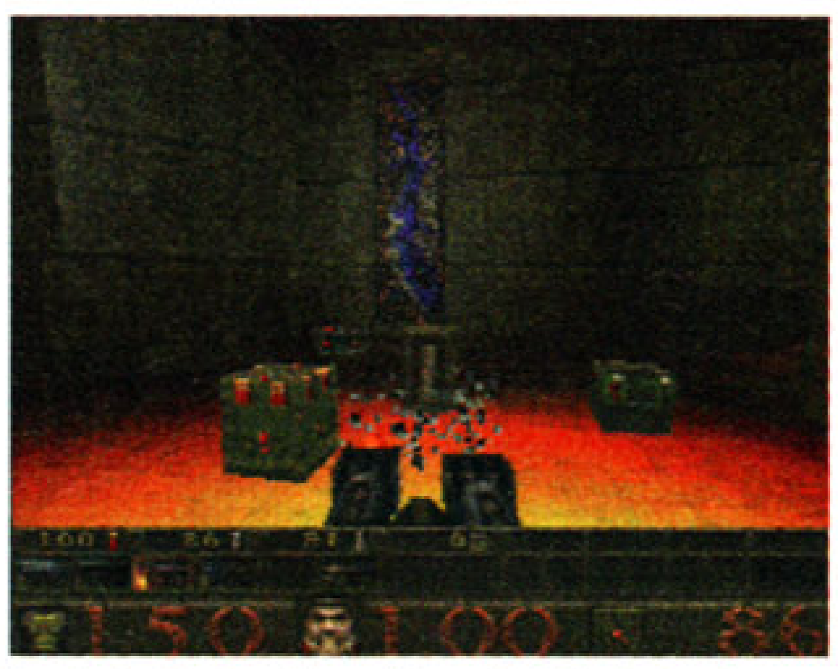


Three examples of how Saturn Quake betters the lighting effects of the PC original! Believe it.



No matter how detailed the environs, Saturn Quake copes admirably. I mean, just look at this!

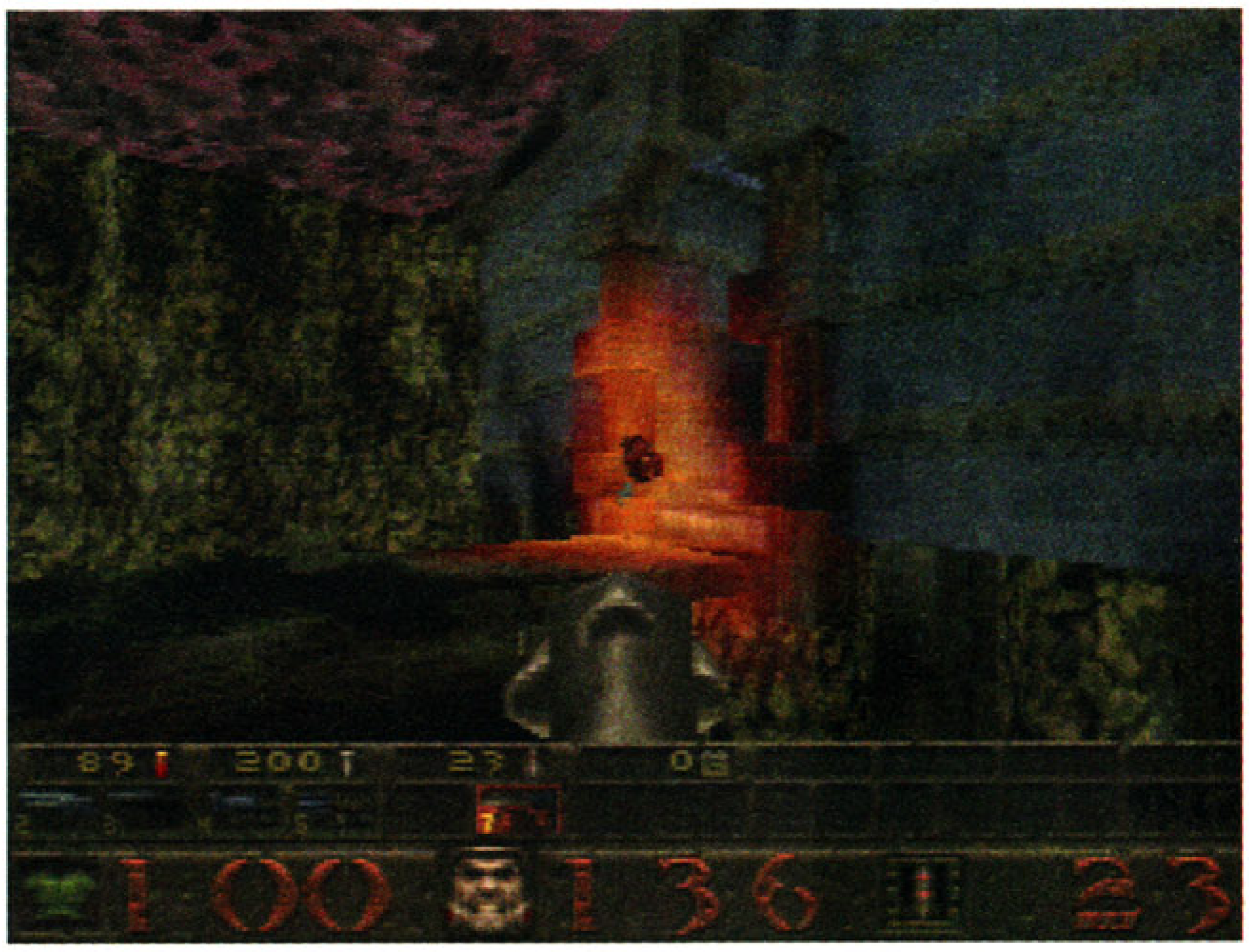
What pushes the Quake engine to new heights on PC is equally as cosmic on the Saturn. I won't dwell on this, allowing the screenshots to tell the whole story, suffice to say that now I have absolutely no doubts that Saturn Quake will be a monumental release for the Sega machine and every bit the technical miracle promised by Lobotomy Software!

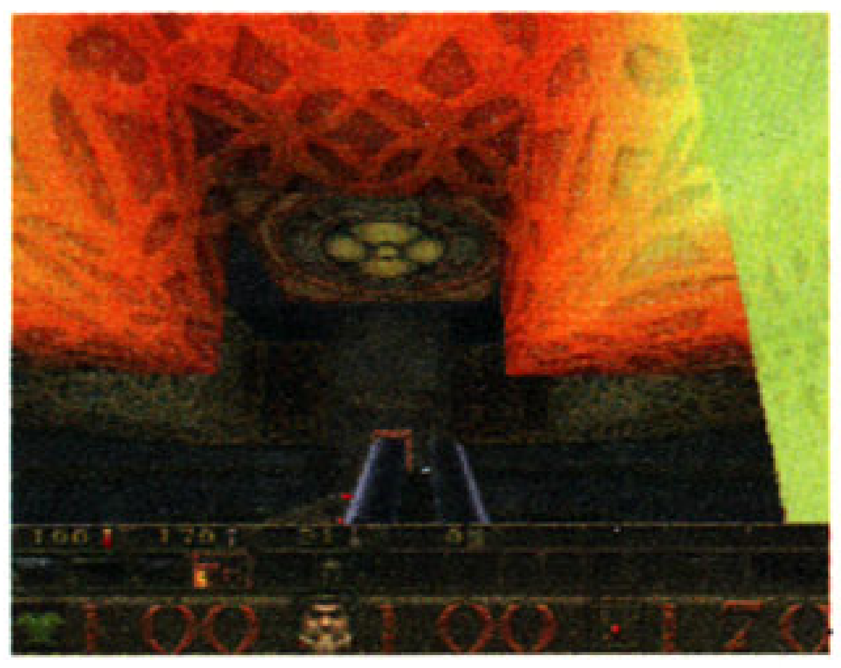
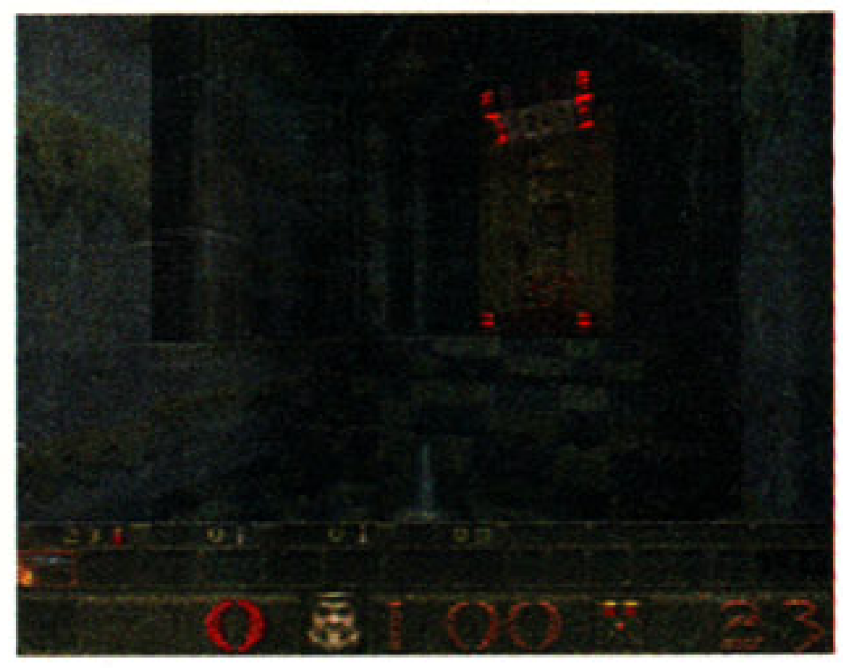
These are EXCLUSIVE shots from the second set of levels in Quake. These huge, intricate levels weren't even shown at the E3. However, monsters still needed to be added at this point.



Saturn Quake's E3 Intro revolved in this room, replete with Quake, Lobotomy, id and Sega logos.



The large open areas of Quake don't seem to cause Lobotomy's SlaveDriver engine any problems!

Virtua Writer™

Yep, Saturn owners sure are passionate about their console. Hence the vast amount of expletives I spend the best part of a day editing out. F@!! this, B%$£@!! that, you wouldn't talk to your mother like that would you, eh? I blame the parents. Anyway, send your soon-to-be-heavily-censored letters to VIRTUA WRITER, 37-39 Millharbour, Isle of Dogs, London, E14 9TZ. The sender of the most entertaining letter will receive a limited edition Virtua Fighter 3 book crammed with exclusive artwork and hilariously translated Japanese text. Hoorah!

RETURN OF THE TEDIOUS DEVIANTS

DEAR SSM

Apart from not agreeing with quite a few of your reviews (which is down to personal preference anyway) there is one thing about your magazine that really annoys us and it must be eliminated, Richard Leadbetter.

Or should we say Richard Bedwetter! What does he think he is, some kind of God? Some gaming guru? Ha! I could kick his butt at VF2, X-Men (I don't think so - RICH) and UMK3 (I don't play games I don't like - RICH) and that doesn't just go for Rich, it goes for all of you!



Fighters MegaMix: Apparently our review shows our bias to 3D fighting games according to two deranged readers.

Your Fighters MegaMix review shows how biased you are towards 3D beat 'em ups and all AM department games (even though they are quite good, but you hype them beyond belief) because you say that the UK version has "loss of speed", "bigger borders" and that "slow down rears it ugly head". According to you that doesn't really matter now does it? Funnily enough though, when the UK version of X-Men suffers from slight slowdown and bigger borders it is an "awful PAL conversion" and you say that "Capcom couldn't have done things worse". Aren't you going a bit over the top, why don't you just say "this is not made by an AM department and does not contain any polygons!" (Yeah, like that's a really coherent argument there lads - RICH)

Also you'd better start watching your back because up until now you have had it easy, but now Saturn Power is on the shelves it looks like they could soon be crapping on you from a great height. They have got quality demos every month, great exclusives and brilliant competitions. Being too cock sure of yourselves will be your downfall.

Alex Charles and David Metcalf, Luton

So we're biased against Capcom games and 2D ones in general eh? That'll be why we awarded Street Fighter Alpha 2 95%. At least SFA2 has speed settings allowing you to bump up the speed to make up for the loss in the PAL game - if X-Men had that I would be far happier. I haven't got anything else against X-Men - in 60Hz mode it's one of my favourite Saturn titles (and earned itself 92% in this regard).

Bottom line: Fighters MegaMix UK is ever-so-slightly slower as opposed to the whopping great 17.5% speed deficiency in X-Men and unlike the Capcom game, the enjoyment is hardly affected at all. Since you sent this letter before you could possibly have seen UK MegaMix I speak with the experience of someone who has seen the game. Unlike the both of you.

While I wouldn't call myself a "gaming guru" as such, I reckon that seven years reviewing Sega videogames (four of 'em editing Sega specific mags) gives SSM an informed opinion lacking in the other journal you mention. Besides, your new-found boyfriends at Saturn Power gave MegaMix 95% as well - and rightly so, it's a superb game. Oh, and I wouldn't worry about those exclusives. Or the true QUALITY demos. You'll find 'em all here first.

Still, at the very least your comments on the quality of AM games have changed for the better. In issue #19 you said they should all be "banished to hell for all eternity". And now they're "quite good". You're obviously not quite as stupid as you're letting on. By the way, did it really take two of you to write this? RICH

BOOK WINNER



SLAY A NO TITS PONY!

DEAR SSM

You asked for controversy and I think I've found it. Check out these suspicious hidden messages within the Sony PlayStation:

1. SLAY SPINY TUNE, TA. Indeed suspicious and controversial. Watch out Sonic!
2. PANTS STAY OILY ON. Youth of today take note.
3. I SAY PLANT NO TOYS. Not sure about this...
4. SLAY A NO TITS PONY. If you ever find one, why not?
5. YOYO TITANS PLANS. Could be Sony's 1997 Christmas ad campaign.
6. SONY SLAP 'N' TITY. Pure amusement.

Low on intellect and with multiple boob mentions, surely this is print worthy material? Maybe not...

Mark Harvey, Sheffield

Methinks you've been banging your head too much on the padded walls of your cell. LEE

SHUT UP FOOL!

DEAR SSM

First of all I would just like to comment on what a great mag you are. I have just been reading CVG's boring, biased April edition and I came across a game in the New Games section called Ultimate Fighting Universe with characters from Fighters MegaMix, Tekken 2 and Soul Edge. Please tell me this is not true.

I would also like to say that my sources from Japan tell me that a two-player demo has been seen of VF3 by Core (makers of Tomb Raider) and they were so impressed they have decided to make Tomb Raider 2 for the Saturn with the new amazing cartridge. I have also heard that the cart can handle a massive one million polygons per second (N64 can only handle 100,000 polygons per second). My sources also tell me that Scud Race is going to come out on the Saturn in Japan at the same time as VF3. I have also heard that Drivers MegaMix is coming out in Japan in a couple of months' time as AM2's secret project. Is this true? Also what is this rubbish that has been flying around other mags about Sega's merger with Bandai meaning games like VF2, VF3 and Sega Rally will be licensed on other formats. Is this true. I have also sent some screen shots from Ultimate Fighters Universe. Please don't edit my letter and please print it as they have never been printed before.

PS Have you got any jobs for me?

Ravinder Wassan, London

I think we managed to clear up the Ultimate Fighters Universe controversy a couple of months ago but to reiterate the point, it was an April fool by those crazy CVG pranksters. As for the rest of your letter, it is quite possibly the most ill-informed, grammatically incorrect and heavily edited letter we've ever printed. As much as you express your dislike for CVG (with accompanying expletives edited out), it is clear to all that your "sources in Japan" (snigger) are none other than the rumour columns of CVG. Tomb Raider 2 is not Saturn bound, the cartridge hasn't been confirmed and one million polygons is very unlikely, Scud Race we wouldn't expect for at least 12 months if at all, Driver Megamix is an unfounded speculative rumour and VF1, 2 and 3 will never appear on PS or N64. Have we got any jobs for you? Well my car could do with a wash, aside from that, no. LEE

LET'S HAVE A HEATED DEBATE

DEAR SSM

Having recently splashed out £44.99 of my hard-earned cash on FIFA '97, I have written to your excellent mag to complain about the "mildly entertaining football sim". One of the main reasons I bought it was because I wanted to play league football with official names. Another reason was because of EA's

big reputation for sport sims. Well I wasn't disappointed on the first count but I think EA are beginning to slip. Granted the graphics are good and the commentary is great but gameplay? Attempt a block tackle and the player feebly sticks his leg out and rarely makes contact with the ball. Slide tackles are pathetic and give you no chance to collect the ball, leaving only the hard tackle which guarantees a red card every time. There are also serious shooting and goal keeping problems. I already own Worldwide Soccer '97 and in terms of gameplay it is far superior to FIFA '97.
Right now, I want to say two things: first if you're thinking of buying FIFA '97, think long and hard. Second, going out to EA, get your act together or give the FIFA licence to someone who can.

Patrick Mostyn, Guilford

I agree 100% with your comments and I agree that the EA Sports brandname has lost a great deal of its sheen in the last couple of years. WorldWide is far, far superior and the new edition (with club teams apparently) should be better still. RICH
As we have often maintained and what your letter is basically adhering to, is that sticking an official licence on a crap piece of software in no way makes that game any better. It is merely a tactic used to cash-in on gullible saps who will buy anything that is "official". Hence the following letter. LEE

THE FIFA BACKLASH BEGINS

DEAR SSM
I recently read your May edition in which you reviewed FIFA '97. I do not think you gave it a very good overall score. You went on to say to say how great Worldwide Soccer '97 is. From your recommendation I purchased SWWS and was very disappointed. It only had one thing going for it and that is the players move really smoothly. Rich reviewed it and at the same time gave EA a really hard time. I think EA are doing a really good job. What do you want from a game? As far as I am concerned the only thing you really need from a game is playability. I played SWWS and found it extremely boring and lacking in anything, so I took it straight down to the shop and asked for my money back.
This is not the first time your mag has recommended a game and then on buying it found it to be very disappointing. It seems to be mostly the AM games. Have you at the mag got shares in AM? It seems so because you are always pushing their games and I find them very disappointing.
I played Daytona and it was absolute crap. I have bought VF2 and Sega Rally which are both playable... just about. Fighting Vipers is another one that should be put in the dustbin. One game that you really pushed last year was NiGHTS. I have found it so far to be the worst game on the Saturn. The only good thing about it was the 3D pad. I took the game back and swapped it for something else.
So come on Rich and the rest of you at Saturn mag, give the games a chance and stop slamming them. If they're playable and enjoyable then leave them alone. It looks like I might be buying FIFA '97 and any other games you slam in the future, they might be better than the ones you're pushing.

Michael Livingstone, Croydon



FIFA '97: It looks great here, but in actual fact it shows a sad decline in the once-great EA Sports range.

If you found SWWS' 97 to be "extremely boring", purchasing FIFA '97 only compounds your misery, as it is a poor addition to a series that appears to have run its course. As for the rest of your comments, the AM games are amongst the finest in the world and only a gibbering buffoon would argue otherwise (see Alex Charles and David Metcalfs' letter - RICH). VF2 and Sega Rally "playable... just about"? I look forward to receiving your hate mail which will undoubtedly pour into the SSM office. And if you decide to follow through your threat of only buying the games we "slam", I'm sure your collection of Dragonheart, Chaos Control and Blazing Dragons will be the envy of all your friends. If you have any. LEE

PHIL'S GENITAL JEOPARDY

DEAR SSM
Before I start I'd like to say that your magazine is FAB! I am writing to inform you that the stage skip and full ammo cheat for Tomb Raider does not work, so could you please put the cheat that does work in your next issue.
By the way, it looks as though Rich will be stamping on your privates Phil.

Fan and Reader

We'd like to take this opportunity to allow Phil to write a witty retort, alas being a badly trained primate he has no thumbs and is thus unable to hold a pen. But we must convey our sincere apologies on behalf of Phil and would like to add that although we often refer to him as a baboon, he is certainly not hung like one. Otherwise Rich would have stamped on his genitals some time ago. LEE

A SPOTTY NERD SPEAKS...

DEAR SSM
Congratulations on what is a superb magazine. But just one thing. I remember some time ago you mentioned that you welcome any suggestions for improving you mag. Well I've got one.
How about letting some of your legions of dedicated readers do some of the game reviews. This would give your mag the edge over your opposition by having a younger person's opinion which is relevant to the people reading the mag. I'll be first in line if such an opportunity arises.

Michael Potts, Derby

It won't. The whole point is that experienced gamers write the reviews. RICH

BRIEFLY...

DEAR SSM
How come since reading Issue 14 of you magazine I have not seen a photo of any of you, unless I'm going blind. Please say I'm not.

Paul Sinclair, Norwich

You're not going blind Paul, but if you saw the rest of the SSM team you just very well may. With the notable exception of myself, the rest of the team are far too ugly to be pictured in this fine publication. Unless they get some bloody good plastic surgery and in the case of Nick, an occasional shave, then this is unlikely to change. LEE
A couple of people can't believe that Lee's surname is his actual name. Well I can reveal that it isn't. He changed it from "Merrick". RICH

DEAR SSM
Most Saturn magazines have a CD demo disc on the front of them, why is SSM an exception?

John Swain, Milton Keynes

Well for starters there are only two Saturn magazines and I predict that the one with "a CD every month" is swiftly going to run into some problems getting demos every month because frankly we get ALL the decent Sega ones and they can only get them from the third party companies... who are swiftly pulling out of the Saturn market, unfortunately... RICH

Most Saturn mags have a CD with a one-level demo taken from one or two OLD and invariably crap Saturn titles, yet have the nerve to charge a fiver for it! So if all you're after is naff five second playable demo disc, you know where to go. As we've mentioned before, we are committed to quality over quantity and do not believe in charging such extortionate prices for substandard discs. Our discs feature several playable demos of the latest Saturn titles and tons of FMV stuff at a more affordable price. Believe me, we have some awesome demo discs lined up between now and Christmas, so until then you'll just have to be patient. LEE

DEAR SSM
I've heard that TVs run at 25 frames per second. So if this is the case then why do companies make games that run at 60 or 30 fps. If the TV can't keep up with it then surely it makes no difference whatsoever? I'm only asking this because you always seem to judge a game purely on its frame rate and that really annoys me.

Neil Roberts, Milton Keynes

TVs do run at 25 fps, but each frame is made up of two interlaced fields, so strictly speaking Virtua Fighter 2 runs at 60 fields per second, giving the illusion of better fluidity. If it doesn't make any difference, just compare VF1 (30fps) to VF2 (60fps). See what I mean? RICH

Q&A

Once again your trusty editor is here with the latest edition of Q+A. You remember: the most popular section of the mag, it would appear, judging by the sheer volume of mail we seem to get. What's more, this month we have some of the worst Q+A ever! So here are the responses, penned by good self along with Sega Overfiend Mark Maslowicz. Send all interesting queries to I'VE GOT SOME VERY VERY INTERESTING QUERIES, Q+A+, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, 37-39 Millharbour, London E14 9TX. And awaaaaay we go!

THE MAN AT CURRYS... HE SAY YES!

Dear SSM

Please times ten print this letter for two reasons, first of all this is the fifth time I have written and secondly I have a £10 bet with a PSX owner that I can get a letter in the best mag in the world (well this one will have to do - RICH).

1. Can you play Megadrive games on the Saturn, because the man at Currys said you can but I'm not so sure.
2. If the answer to the last question is yes, please disregard this question but will there be a future release of any Premier Manager games?
3. Any hidden cheats for DD or SWWS '97? They got a bit boring after a while.
4. Are there any more secret characters in VF2?
5. One last question: is Die Hard Trilogy worth getting?
6. Just one more. Are the Special Reserve clubs you advertise worth joining and why?

Alan Evans, NoAddressVille

This is quite possibly the worst Q+A letter ever! Absurd questions plus the usual "this is the fifth time I've written" nonsense.

1. No you can't. The carts wouldn't even fit inside! And no, Mega-CD games don't work either. 2. What on earth has this question got to do with the first one? Any road up, Gremlin have a management game coming up later this year. 3. If by DD you mean Destruction Derby, then no. And we've printed the SWWS secret moves three times now so I won't do it again. 4. Aside from Dural, no. 5. Read the review. It's precisely for answering this type of question that we write them. Sigh. 6. Let me ask YOU a question: do you want cheap games and tons of special offers?

I'LL BLOW MY BRAINS OUT!

Dear SSM

Could you please answer my questions cos if you don't I'll blow my brains out.

1. When is Duke Nukem 3D coming out?
2. Will it be better than Exhumed?
3. When and how much will the NetLink be?
4. Why are all FIFA games for the Saturn so shit?
5. Why does the Saturn nick all of the PlayStation games?

Thanx for answering my questions!

Jamie Hagland, Somewhere

Quite possibly runner-up as the worst Q+A letter here!

1. It's looking like a late September release now. 2. They're different games: Duke's more action orientated, Exhumed is more of a test for the grey matter. 3. This is quite possibly the most grammatically incorrect question in the world ever, but I think you'll find the information that the NetLink isn't coming out in the UK to be quite enlightening. 4. Perhaps you're being a bit harsh, but I think it fair to say that the Saturn isn't so high on EA's list of priority gaming platforms. 5. Er... it doesn't.

A 12-YEAR-OLD WHO NEEDS ANSWERS

Dear SSM

I'm a 12-year-old who needs answers! By the way, in your last issue you gave us a demo, cheers it was awesome. Oh, I almost forgot:

1. Is it worth getting Fighters MegaMix or VF3?
2. When GunBlade comes out will you be able to use the Predator gun?
3. Is there going to be a sequel to Policenauts?
4. If so, when will it be out?
5. What's better out of Die Hard Arcade and Fighting Force?
6. What percentage did you give Fighters MegaMix?
7. How come Area 51 got 72%, to me it deserves at least 90%

Please print this because it's the first time I've written.

Adam Russell, Hounslow

1. VF3 won't be out for ages so get MegaMix. 2. IF GunBlade comes out I think it will be compatible since the Predator works the same way as the Virtua Gun. 3. If there is, it won't come out over here. 5. Fighting Force will probably be better, but we can't say for sure because it isn't finished yet. 6. It got 95%. Pay more attention! 7. Reviews are personal opinions, but if you really think it deserves over 90% I shall pity you... but not dismiss you.

TOMB RAIDER CONUNDRUM

Dear SSM,

I got this debug mode from Ceefax on Channel 4, for Tomb Raider. "To make Lara do a handstand, hang her off a ledge and a without letting go hold down the walk button and move forward". Does this work because when I tried it, it didn't.

Dean A Bell, Somewhere

Curiously enough this is the only bit of Tomb Raider that isn't in the Saturn version but does appear in the PlayStation and PC versions of the game. Why? We can't tell you.

HOLY GRAIL THAT IS SSM

Dear Holy Grail that is SSM,

Could you please answer my questions on the following matters of annoyance rearing their ugly heads in my otherwise pleasant and laid back lifestyle.

1. Is anything going to be omitted from the PAL version of Fighters MegaMix that was in the Japanese version.
2. Has anything extra been added?
3. Is my friend talking out of his rear-end when he says that the PlayStation version of VF2 is 50% complete (and he better be)?
4. Do you have a prospective release date for Saturn Resident Evil?
5. I have recently purchased a RF unit for my Saturn. Am I imagining it or has my picture lost some of its edge?
6. Any news on VF3?
7. CVG recently featured a game in their previews section called Ultimate Fighting Universe with characters from FV and VF. What's this all about then?

Alex James, Newport

1. No, aside from the Japanese text which has been translated to English, obviously. Unlike their US counterparts, Sega Europe prefer to leave most titles intact. 2. It's a lot tougher. 3. There is no PlayStation version of VF2. Your friend is quite clearly supremely jealous of what is undeniably one of the greatest home games in existence. 4. It will be out in September. See the feature this issue. 5. Yes, the RF Unit hasn't the same quality as a good SCART connection - to be honest you're letting your Saturn down if you don't have a SCART lead. 6. If we did have any, we wouldn't put it in Q+A. 7. It's about a crazy fool called Ed Lomas who cut out some characters from Tekken 2 and stuck them on MegaMix screenshots in a kind of April Fool style scenario. Y'know just like a joke, but without the funny bit at the end...

FAQ

That's Frequently Asked Questions. The most popular queries thrown our way are tackled in this concise section. So let's go!

1. Is Tomb Raider 2 going to be a Sony exclusive?

It's going to be for PC and PlayStation. Unfortunately, Core's Saturn engine just can't handle the intricate new levels planned for Tomb Raider 2. This is no joke or misinformation, Tomb Raider 2 is NOT in development for the Sega Saturn. Truly this is a sad day, but at least Core are still continuing to support the Saturn with potentially ace games such as Fighting Force and Ninja.

2. Are Sega going to release the RAM cart needed to play games such as Metal Slug?

Unfortunately there are no plans at present. SSM believes this is a great shame as SNK's titles should be released over here and many titles that are planned for a European release (such as Marvel Super Heroes) benefit immensely from the add-on.

3. Which peripheral should I buy for the Saturn?

This question is essentially a distilled version of the huge amount of variations we get (should I get an MPEG card, Virtua Gun... blah blah). And the answer is: get an analogue pad! Better still, get a copy of NiGHTS with the pad. Both game and pad are utterly ESSENTIAL!



ISSUE #1 NOV 95
Reviewed: Clockwork Knight 2, Sim City 2000, Theme Park, Street Fighter: The Movie, NBA Jam TE, Robotica, NHL Hockey, Rayman, World Series Baseball.
FIRST ever issue of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE replete with features on Virtua Fighter 2 and Virtua Cop!



ISSUE #2 DEC 95
Reviewed: Virtua Fighter 2, Virtua Cop, Firestorm: Thunderhawk 2, Hi-Octane, Victory Boxing, Golden Axe: The Duel, Mansion of Hidden Souls, Hebereke's Popoito, CyberSpeedway. Showcased: Virtua Fighter 2, Firestorm, X-Men: Children of the Atom.



ISSUE #3 JAN 96
Reviewed: Sega Rally, F1 Live Information, Galactic Attack, Mystaria, Worms, Virtua Racing, Off-World Interceptor. Showcases: Guardian Heroes, Mystaria, FIFA '96... plus all the secrets of Virtua Cop! Plus ultimate Sega Rally coverage... the BEST racing game!



ISSUE #4 FEB 96
Reviewed: Wing Arms, FIFA '96, Virtual Golf, Johnny Bazookatone, Toshinden, Cyberia, Casper, D, True Pinball, World Cup Golf. Showcases: Vampire Hunter/Street Fighter Alpha, D and all the secret cheats of Sega Rally! Plus Panzer Zwei AND part one of the VF2 Masterclass!



ISSUE #5 MAR 96
Reviewed: X-Men: Children of the Atom, Darius, Baku Baku Animal, NFL Quarterback Club, Hang On '96, Titan Wars. Showcases: Euro '96, Legend of Thor, Street Fighter Alpha, X-Men, Guardian Heroes, Panzer Zwei! Plus: VF2 masterclass and Sega Rally guide!



ISSUE #6 APR 96
Reviewed: WipEout, Magic Carpet, Street Fighter Alpha, Shellshock, Valora Valley Golf, Shining Wisdom, Gex. Showcases: Magic Carpet, Gun Griffon, MK3, Panzer Zwei, DarkStalkers/Vampire Hunter. Plus: VF2 Masterclass part three AND a cool WipEout guide.



ISSUE #7 MAY 96
FREE! REVIEW AND TIPS BOOK! And! NiGHTS revealed! Reviews: Euro '96, Panzer Zwei, Defcon 5, The Horde, Nightwarriors/Vampire Hunter, Revolution X, Alone in the Dark 2. VF2 masterclass: the penultimate edition. WipEout guide part two, plus all the X-Men moves too!



ISSUE #8 JUN 96
Heart of Darkness featured... and it's still not out! Reviewed:Guardian Heroes, Ultimate Mortal Kombat 3, In the Hunt, Discworld, 3D Lemmings. Showcases: Panzer Zwei final, NiGHTS, Guardian Heroes final update. Full detailage on top games still worth buying today!



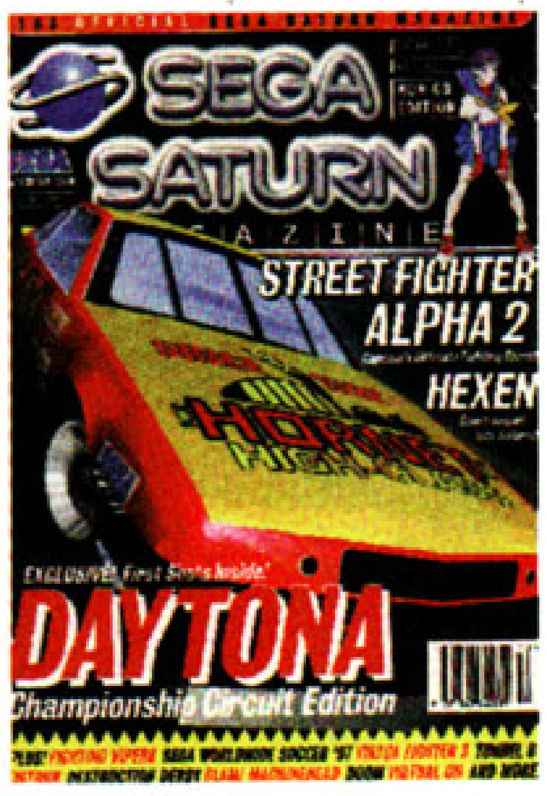
ISSUE #9 JUL 96
Full E3 report with first Cop 2 coverage! Reviewed: Loaded, Need for Speed, Shockwave Assault, Big Hurt Baseball, Blackfire, WWF, Striker, Virtual Open Tennis, Ghen War. Showcases: Sonic X-Treme (now canned!), VF Kids, Exhumed, Space Hulk and of course NiGHTS!



ISSUE #10 AUG 96
NiGHTS: Sonic Team's amazing game finally arrives! Reviewed: NiGHTS, Road Rash, Primal Rage, Slam and Jam, Starfighter 3000, Olympic Football, Sea Bass Fishing, Pro Pinball. Showcases: Athlete Kings, VF Kids, Alien Trilogy. Also: Guardian Heroes Tips!



ISSUE #11 SEP 96
Amazing Candy Fighting Vipers Cover! Reviewed: VF Kids, Alien Trilogy, Athlete Kings, Exhumed, NBA Action, Space Hulk, Keio Flying Squadron, Bust-A-Move, Story of Thor, PowerPlay Hockey. Showcases: Sega Ages, Cop 2, Soviet Strike. Plus: Shining Wisdom tips



ISSUE #12 OCT 96
Daytona CCE revealed! Reviewed: WorldWide Soccer '97, Fighting Vipers, Actua Golf, Destruction Derby, Blam! Machinehead, Bubble Bobble Pack, Highway 2000. Also included: Awesome NiGHTS guide that will blow you away. And! The dread arrival of The Master!



ISSUE #13 NOV 96
Amazing Street Fighter Alpha 2 coverage! Reviewed: Street Fighter Alpha 2, World Series Baseball 2, Tomb Raider, Earthworm Jim 2, Impact Racing. Showcases: Vipers part 2 plus programmer interview, Tomb Raider. Plus: tips to get you all the way through Exhumed!



ISSUE #14 DEC 96
World's First Virtua Cop 2 Review! Also reviewed: Daytona CCE, Amok, Street Racer, Hardcore 4x4, Chaos Control, Three Dirty Dwarves, Blazing Dragons, Crimewave, PGA Golf '97. Showcases: Cop 2, Christmas NiGHTS, Daytona CCE. Lobotomy Software interviewed!



ISSUE #15 JAN 97
COVER CD WITH VIRTUAL ON, DAYTONA CCE, WORLDWIDE SOCCER, TOMB RAIDER! Reviewed: Virtual On, Blast Chamber, NHL Hockey '97, Command and Conquer, Sega Ages, Mighty Hits, Tetris Plus, Breakpoint, Krazy Ivan, Tunnel B1, Madden '97, Jewels of the Oracle.



ISSUE #16 FEB 97
Amazing Fighters MegaMix Coverage! 16 pages of small tips – it's all in here! Reviewed: Sonic 3D Blast, NFL Quarterback Club '97, NBA Jam Extreme, Toshinden URA, Tempest 2000, Batman Forever, Bug Too!, Dark Savior. Showcases: Bug Too! Tomb Raider guide part one!



ISSUE #17 MAR 97
Manx TT Exclusively Revealed! Reviewed: Die Hard Arcade, Crusader, Hexen, Die Hard Trilogy, Grid Run, Andretti Racing, Tilt, Soviet Strike. Showcases: Hexen, Soviet Strike, Fighters MegaMix, Die Hard Arcade. Tips: Tomb Raider part two. Exhumed Team Dolls!



ISSUE #18 APR 97
Duke Nukem 3D! Lobotomy interview! Reviewed: Manx TT, Area 51, "Incredible" Hulk, Norse by Norsewest, Iron Man/X-O Manowar, Mass Destruction, Spot Goes To Hollywood, MegaMan X3. Tips: Tomb Raider Conclusion, Dark Savior, Die Hard Trilogy. AM Annex Interviewed!



ISSUE #19 MAY 97
CD WITH DEMOS OF SONIC BLAST 3D, VIRTUAL ON AND DIE HARD ARCADE! World's First Quake Shots! Reviewed: Bomberman, Crypt Killer, FIFA '97, NBA Live '97, Dragonheart, Swagman, Puzzle Fighter, Space Jam, Return Fire. Tips: MegaMix part one, Die Hard Trilogy part two, Soviet Strike.



ISSUE #20 JUN 97
Last Bronx Revealed! More incredible Quake! Reviewed: Fighters MegaMix, King of Fighters 95, Pandemonium, Mr Bones, Mechwarrior 2, Scorcher, Shining the Holy Ark. Showcases: Pandemonium, Mechwarrior 2, Shining Holy Ark! Tips: MegaMix, Die Hard part three, Hexen part one.



ISSUE #21 JUL 97
WipEout 2097! Resident Evil/ Marvel Super Heroes exclusive! Reviewed: Jonah Lomu Rugby, Battlestations, ID4, Actua Soccer Club Edition, The Crow. Sonic Jam feature! Double AM3 interviews: arcade Top Skater, Last Bronx! Tips: Shining Holy Ark part one, MegaMix part three, Hexen part two!

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SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE



Hear no Evil See no Evil!

Deep within Capcom HQ, work continues at an astonishing pace on arguably the finest 3D adventure title ever. So much so in fact that we've just taken delivery of an 80% complete version of Resident Evil. LEE NUTTER takes a tentative walk through Capcom's house of horrors.

Capcom's Saturn development is arguably the best of any third party developer. Over the last couple of years Capcom have supplied Saturn owners with a wealth of arcade beat 'em ups, such as the awesome Street Fighter Alpha 2 and X-Men COTA, a trend which appears set to continue. Why, just flick through the glossy pages of this esteemed magazine and you'll discover the very latest earth-shattering pictures of Saturn Marvel Super Heroes and Street Fighter Collection. However, Capcom's latest and possibly greatest Saturn development is not another 2D arcade beat 'em up, but rather the multi-genre gore-fest of Resident Evil. And from what we've seen already, we don't mind saying that this game is going to be huge! Now, ordinarily we reserve such comments for the review, but after an exhaustive play test of the very latest Saturn version of the game, it's difficult not to feel enthusiastic about it. And, with the news that the game is to feature all-new Saturn specific modes, Saturn owners can look forward to a truly monumental release.



The claustrophobic corridors provide players with little room for manoeuvring around zombies, so attack is the only way to survive.













Rooftop drama with the Tyrant.



Jill discovers the scientist's corpses.

Above: What sort of an adventure game would it be without an Indiana Jones-style boulder chase sequence eh? Exactly. So there you have it, Jill being chased by a rolling boulder.

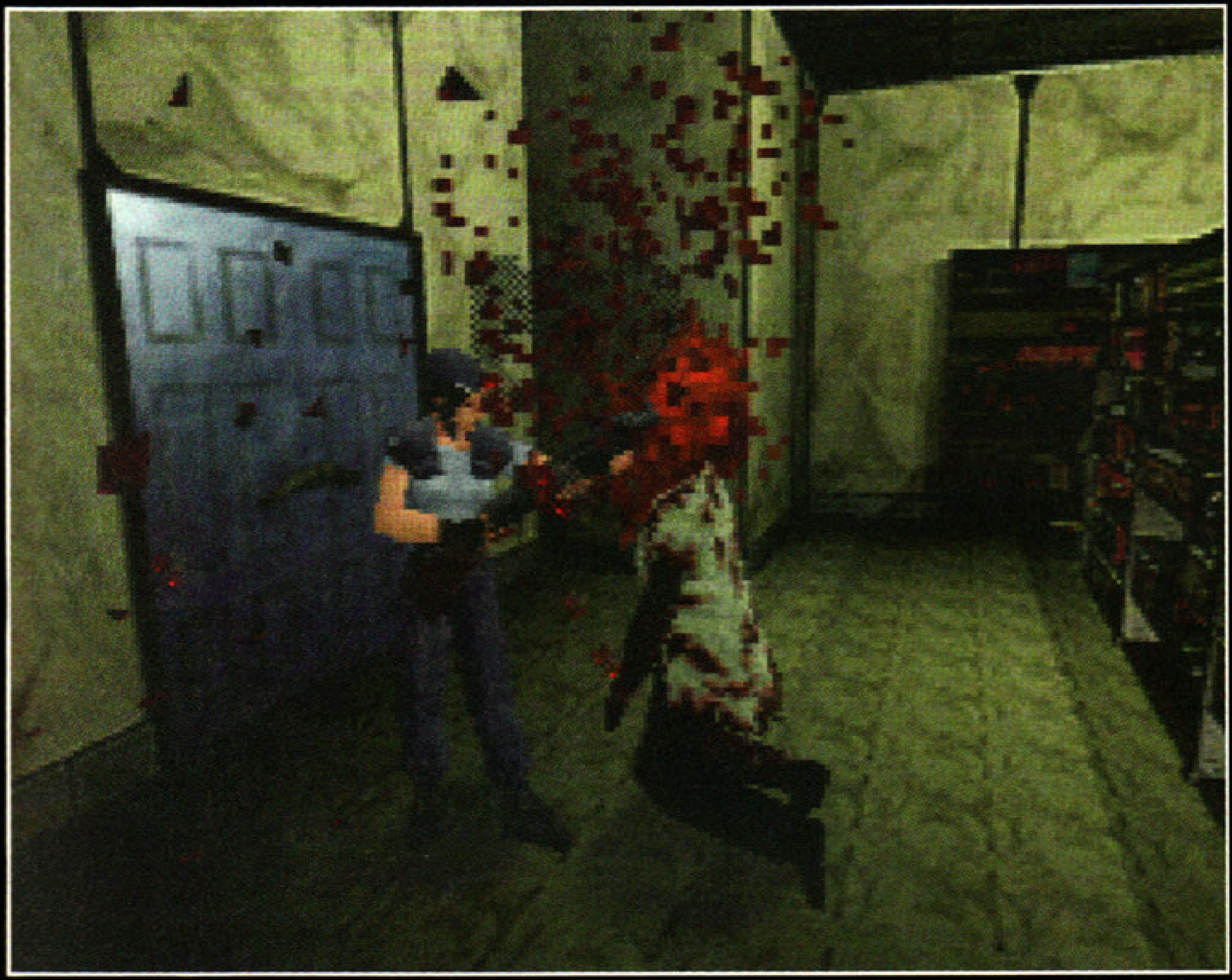
BE AFRAID... BE VERY AFRAID

Playing Resident Evil is like nothing gamers will have experienced before. Though comparisons will undoubtedly be drawn with Core Design's Tomb Raider, essentially the two games play very differently. For the most part, the gameplay of Resident Evil is of the kill or be killed variety with players being stalked throughout the mansion and its ground by hordes of bizarre genetic mutations. The range of monsters is astonishing, from the giant spiders to the huge Tyrant boss, all thirsting for the taste of your blood. Survival soon becomes the main priority as operatives struggle to escape the confines of the mansion and survive the horrors lurking within. Weapons are scarce and ammo is even scarcer, so it's not simply a case of running around in a mad blasting frenzy. Some monsters are best avoided altogether as they're either too tough or too difficult to hit. Conserving ammo is the key to success, as players soon learn how to side step the hordes of genetic mutations in order to amass enough ammo to destroy the final boss.

All the while players struggle to overcome a wealth of diverse puzzles featured throughout Resident Evil. Most of these require players to locate a certain object before using it to unlock a door mechanism, or finding a hidden switch. But later on the puzzles become more complex, with chemical formulas being mixed and even a piano to play! On the whole, the difficulty level of the puzzles appears to be pitched just right, presenting a deep challenge to even experienced gamers.

However, what really sets Resident Evil apart from Tomb Raider is the tense atmosphere. Terror lurks around every corner with some genuine shocks in store for first time players. Savage dogs leaping through windows, seemingly dead zombies chomping at your ankles and giant snakes bursting through walls are just a taste of the shocks in store. Add to this the macabre music, eerie silences and accompanying moans from the hordes of the undead, and Resident Evil works better than a strong laxative.











Cringe-worthy American actors have been drafted in by Capcom to shoot the horrific FMV intro. We sincerely hope these aren't the same actors who are to star in the official Resident Evil movie (see the news section).



Jill is wise to use caution when investigating the underground sewers, as any second now she'll find herself confronted by one of the much-hyped new monsters.











The power generator rooms play host to the deadly Chimeras, who swing from the ceiling and attack with their sharp claws.

ZOMBIES

After a lethal experimental virus was accidentally released amongst the Laboratory technicians, the effects were devastating. After the initial itchy sores had subsided, the laboratory technicians began to loose their sanity as their minds and bodies slowly began to decay. Their stinking rotting corpses stagger around the mansion, arms outstretched in the hope of snaring their pray and feasting on its blood. However, their lack of agility and intelligence makes them easy to run around, though if absolutely necessary a single shotgun blast to the head will take it clean off in a bloody mess. Players should also beware of downed zombies as they tend to play dead, awakening only to chomp at your ankles.

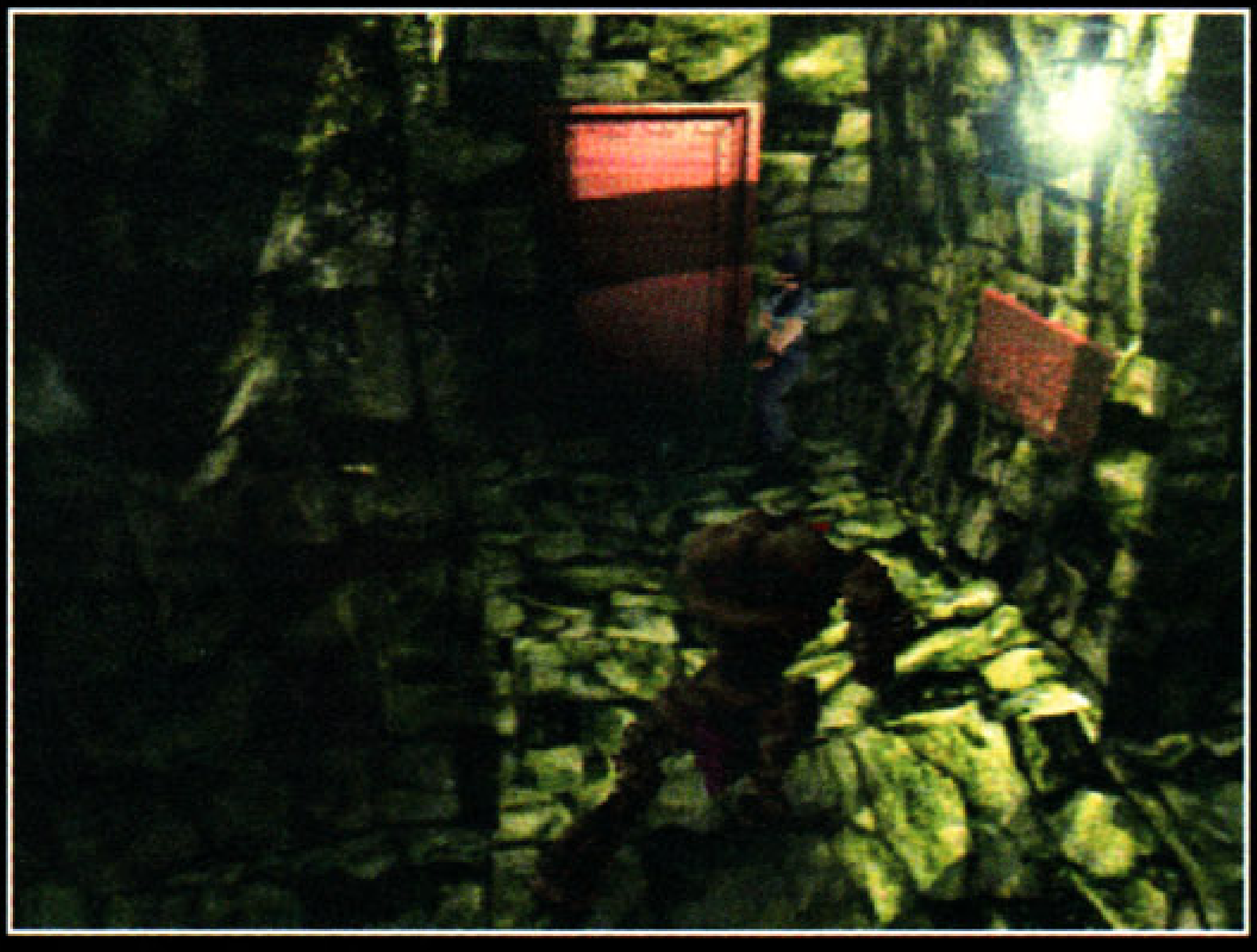


SHOOTING STARS

The problem that has beset so many other adventure games in the past, is that their very linear structure means that once the game has been completed there's little to entice players back. Therefore it's to Capcom's credit that such pitfalls have been avoided with Resident Evil. The gameplay is surprisingly non-linear, with players being required to make decisions at several key points during the game. Depending on which choices have been made greatly affects the unfolding plot and eventually the game's ending. However, the main source of variety in Resident Evil stems from which of the two STARS' operatives players select at the beginning. Choosing either Chris or Jill affects which weapons players are able to discover, the amount of monsters and ultimately the outcome of the plot.

CHRIS REDFIELD

Though Chris handles himself considerably well when separated from his fellow STARS crew members, players choosing to take on his mantle are essentially opting to travel the most difficult route through the game. That said, players who wish to explore every nook and cranny of the mansion, and solve every last puzzle in order to appreciate the full splendour of Resident Evil, are best off choosing Chris. To begin with our hero is ill-prepared for the horrors which await him, being devoid of all firearms and armed only with his trusty combat knife. Obviously this causes a few problems when encountering flesh-eating zombies, hell-bent on sinking their teeth into your flesh and draining it of blood. So to begin with, Chris' first priority is to seek out a more powerful weapon. Once the Beretta



That'll be the new monster lurking in the underground sewers.



After dropping down from the ceiling the Chimera attacks Jill with its claws.



Arms outstretched, an approaching zombie prepares to give Jill a good mauling.



The devastating effects of the shotgun are evident with a close range blast to the head.



The decapitated zombie lies dead on the ground in a pool of its own blood. Awesome.



Possibly the most alarming thing about Resident Evil is the way that by the end of the game you become totally desensitised to the gratuitous violence.



One false move and they'll attack!



A bit of bazooka action for Jill.

Before the STARS are able to make their escape to the helicopter pad where Alpha Team's Brad awaits them, the power to the emergency lift needs to be turned on. And that's just what Jill's doing right here.



has been located, Chris' superior shooting skills become evident, as he is able to fire with greater accuracy than Jill, requiring less bullets to take down the mutated monsters. It's a good job too, as the plentiful ammo supply enjoyed by Jill is not available to Chris, with extra ammo being scarce throughout the game. By way of compensating somewhat, Chris' bulky frame is better able to withstand an enemy onslaught than that of Jill, being able to take several maulings before death comes knocking. However, Chris is what the Americans may refer to as a "jock", being all brawn and little brains. So from time to time Chris requires assistance from his fellow STARS team members to get him out of some of the more tricky situations.

To make matters even more difficult, Chris left his backpack at the drop zone and his action slacks are only able to carry up to six items at a time. This means playing as Chris requires a great deal of forward planning and effective management of resources. Much of the time players find themselves legging it back and forth between storage rooms and depositing unwanted objects in favour of more useful items.

Despite his shortcomings, Chris Redfield is a skilled member of the STARS Alpha Team whose superior shooting skills, strength and resilience make him a worthy, if challenging character to play as.

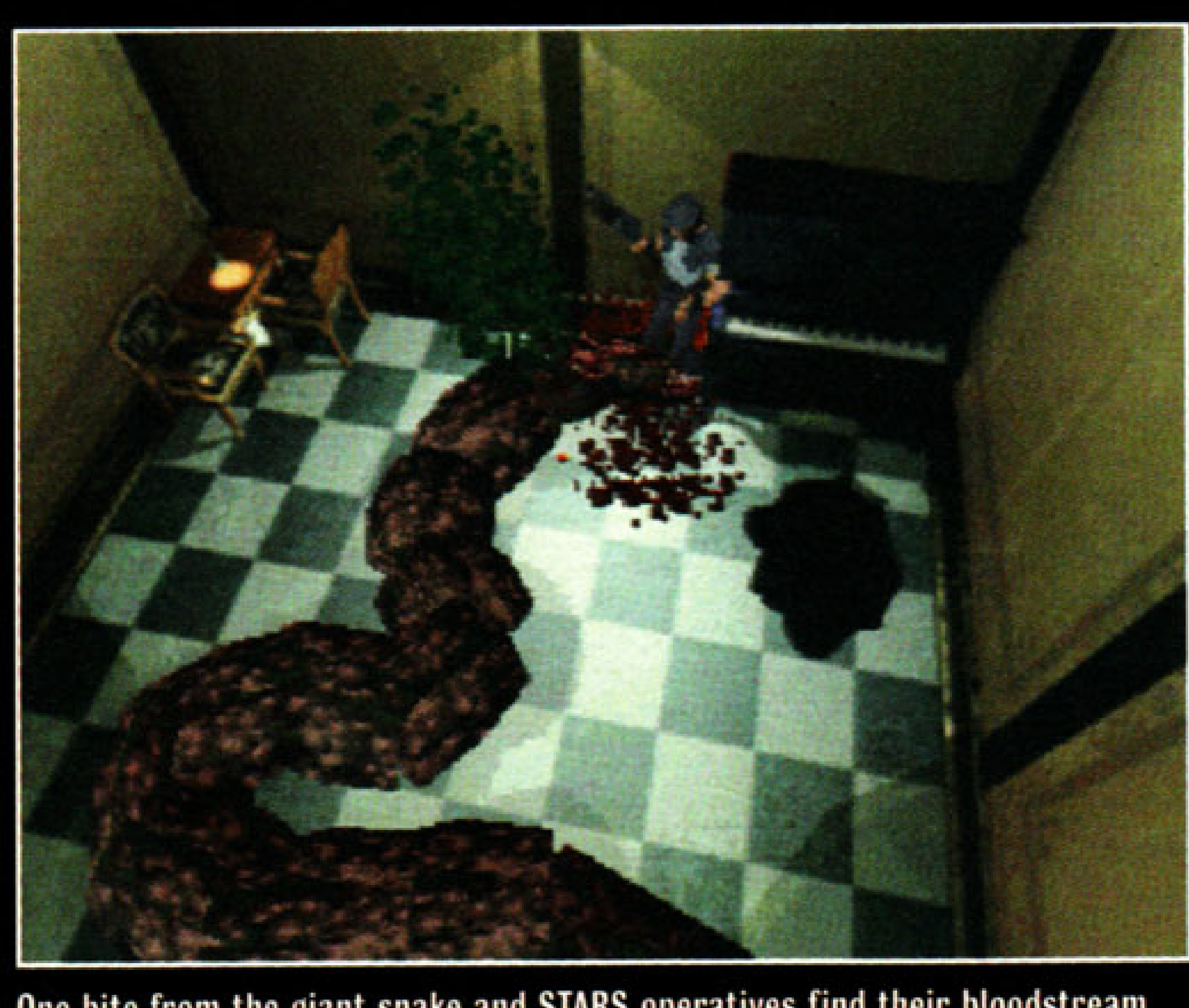


JILL VALENTINE

Jill Valentine is a relatively new member of the STARS Alpha team whose mission through the horrors of Resident Evil is considerably simpler and shorter than that of her colleague for a number of reasons. Firstly, Jill begins her adventure armed with a Beretta pistol, having a clear advantage over Chris who spends much of the early part of the game foraging for weapons and ammo. In addition, Jill is given a lock-pick early on by fellow STARS team mate Barry Burton, enabling Jill to enter certain rooms and storage areas not accessible to Chris without the corresponding key. Jill is also able to carry up to eight items in her navy blue action slacks, her larger inventory meaning that managing resources is a tad simpler than playing as Chris. Jill's game is also considerably easier in that fewer monsters patrol the corridors of the mansion, so players needn't worry too much about being overrun by hordes of the undead. Besides, even if Jill were to find herself in a spot of bother, secret admir-



The dramatic fixed camera positions (reminiscent of Infogrames' Alone In The Dark) allow players the best possible view of the spectacular action sequences.



One bite from the giant snake and STARS operatives find their bloodstream infected with a poisonous venom. Let's hope Barry's close by to lend a hand.





HUNTERS

After the bio-research secrets have been uncovered, one of the STARS' operatives attracts the unwanted attention of the deadly Hunters, who take it upon themselves to follow the STARS into the mansion. Genetically engineered to be devastating fighting machines, the Hunters are extremely difficult to avoid and even more difficult to kill. When attacking their enemy, the Hunters leap about into the air, making targeting at times a virtual impossibility. Their sharp claws prove deadly and are often used for severing heads from shoulders. A close range shot from the powerful Colt or several shotgun blasts at close range should see off their potential threat, letting out a painful scream as they die.









Chris investigates the latest diary entry in the researcher's private quarters...



When all of a sudden a marauding zombie emerges from the closet behind him.



In the panic which follows, Chris draws his Beretta and fills the zombie full of lead.









CERBEROS

After being infected with the same lethal strain of virus which drove the lab technicians insane, the one-time guard dogs of the mansion are similarly affected. Still the hungry Dobermans retain their in-bread instinct to protect the mansion and its grounds from intruders, and that means you! Cerberos dogs often hunt their prey in packs of three, combining speed and a resilience to bullets to cause the STARS a few headaches. Players are best advised to use the shotgun when confronting a pack of ravenous dogs, as the wide ranging shards of lead blasted out often hit several dogs at once. Wounded dogs let out a soft whimpering cry, but don't be fooled, these dogs would rather rip your balls off than fetch your slippers.



>> er Barry Burton is on hand to make sure she comes to no harm.

However, in many respects Jill is worse off than Chris. Being of a slight build, her body is less resilient to an enemy attack, taking less chomps from a marauding zombie to kill her. In addition, Jill's aim isn't up to the same standard as that of her team mate, requiring her to take more time when aiming and with less accuracy than sharp shooter Chris. Despite her failings, Jill's superior intelligence and lock-picking abilities make her mission a more straightforward affair, though rather less challenging.



THE EVIL HAS LANDED

As we exclusively revealed in last month's SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, the long-awaited Saturn version of Resident Evil will be quite different to its PlayStation brethren. As opposed to merely churning out a carbon copy of the original game, Capcom have seized the opportunity to incorporate various elements into the Saturn version that failed to come to fruition in the original game. Capcom have remained tight-lipped as to what exactly these enhancements are, until now that is. A recent press conference held by Capcom of Japan outlined several improvements they are planning to add to the original formula. Though a number of these improvements can be seen throughout the unfinished copy we've received, by and large these enhancements have yet to be added. But they will, you'll see.

Possibly the most exciting addition to Saturn Resident Evil is the planned inclusion of an Arena Battle/Survival Mode. This is a special mini-game which becomes available once the regular game has been completed. Choosing to control either Chris or Jill, players progress through fifteen stages fending off a continuous onslaught of eleven different types of genetically mutated monsters which advance with relentless speed. Only one weapon of choice is available to begin with, though

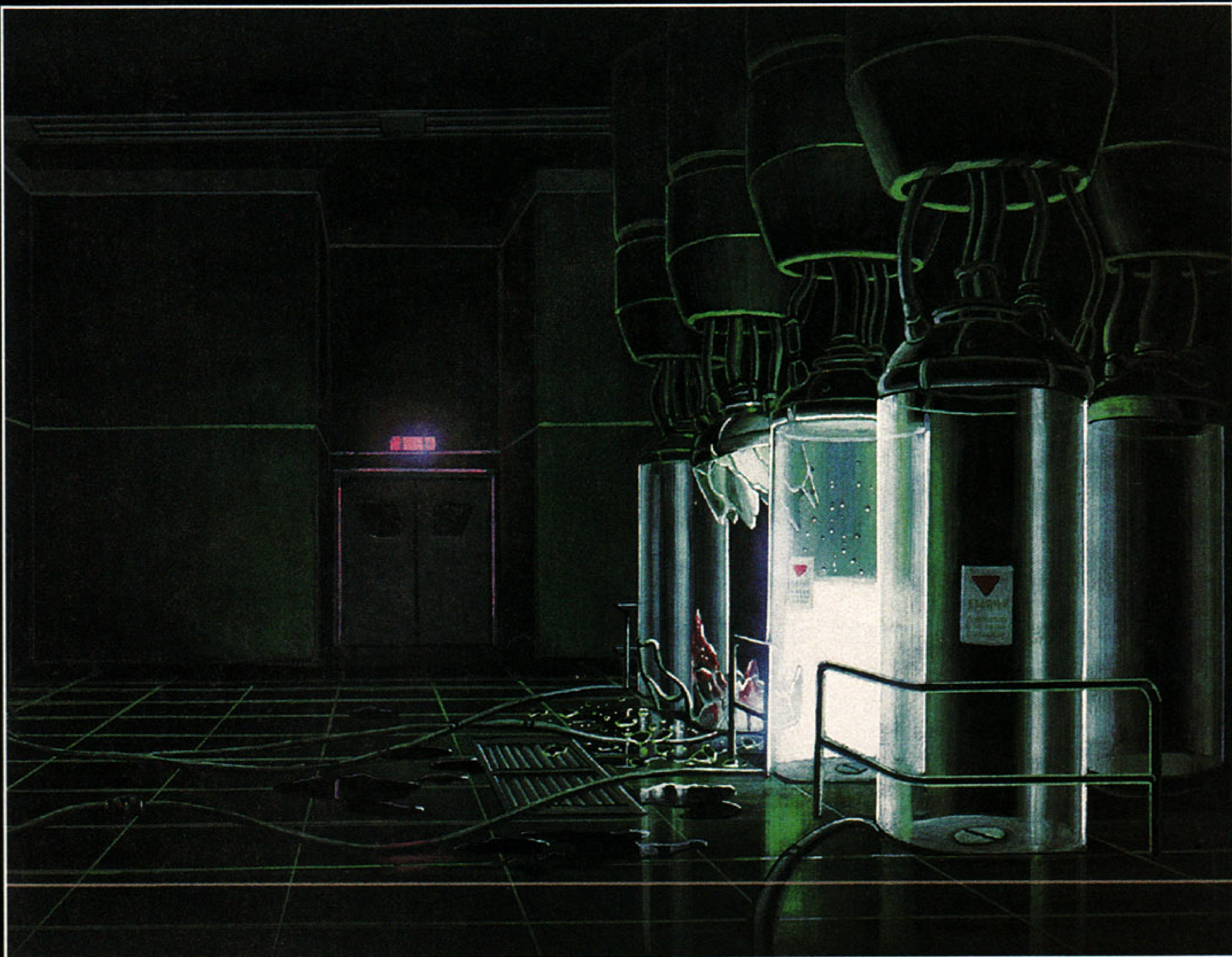


There's more to Resident Evil than mindless violence, as there's a strong puzzle element to the game also.





The dimly lit corridors and eerie music which accompany the blood-thirsty action provide Resident Evil with an atmosphere unparalleled in an y other videogame ever. As such, players are well advised to keep a change of underwear close by when playing, with some genuine shocks in store.

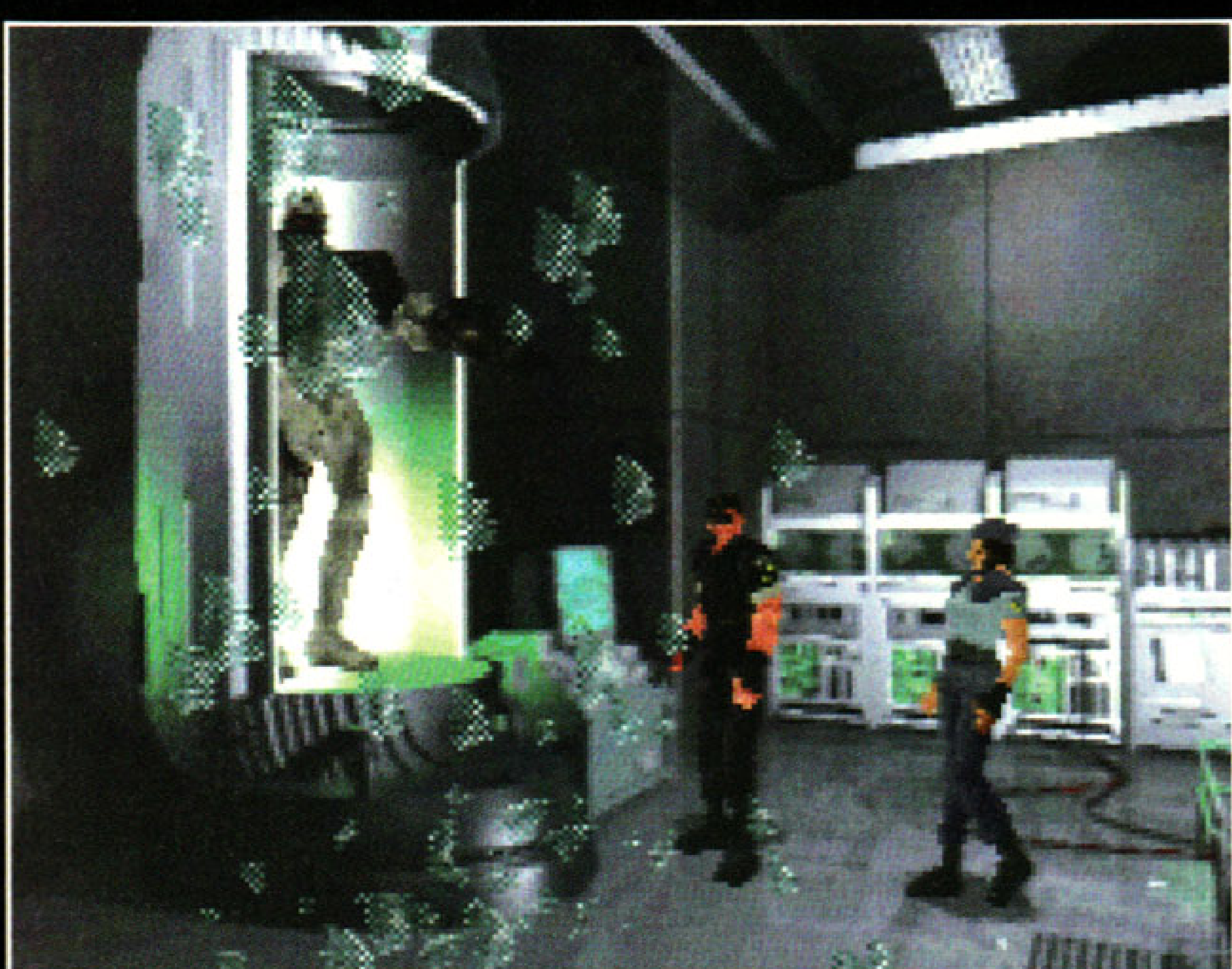


The penultimate battle takes place in the genetic research laboratory, where a huge biological killing machine known as the Tyrant is kept.

more are collected as players use all their skills to battle through the stages. Players are then ranked upon completion or demise according to items used, the time taken and lives remaining.

At long last Capcom have also confirmed Saturn Resident Evil will DEFINITELY feature new monsters... and we've seen 'em! The new, as yet unnamed monster in the 80% version we have is a redesigned version of a Hunter and lurks in the sewers beneath the mansion, acting similarly but looking quite different. Unfortunately, the others haven't been programmed in yet but are slated to make an appearance in the all-new Arena Battle Mode, though details as to what form they will take are scarce. In addition, survivors of the PlayStation version may recall the huge Tyrant boss at the end of the game. A genetically engineered super-creature, the Tyrant was very agile and extremely difficult to kill. Well, depending on your point of view and game playing skills, the good or bad news is that for the Saturn version of Resident Evil there are now two Tyrants to destroy!

As reported way back in Issue 17, both of the playable STARS' operatives, Chris Redfield and Jill Valentine, will feature new and original costumes. Though this will have no bearing on the gameplay whatsoever, it's nice to see a third party developer taking their time to ensure that Saturn own-









The Tyrant turns on its creator, skewering him with its claw.

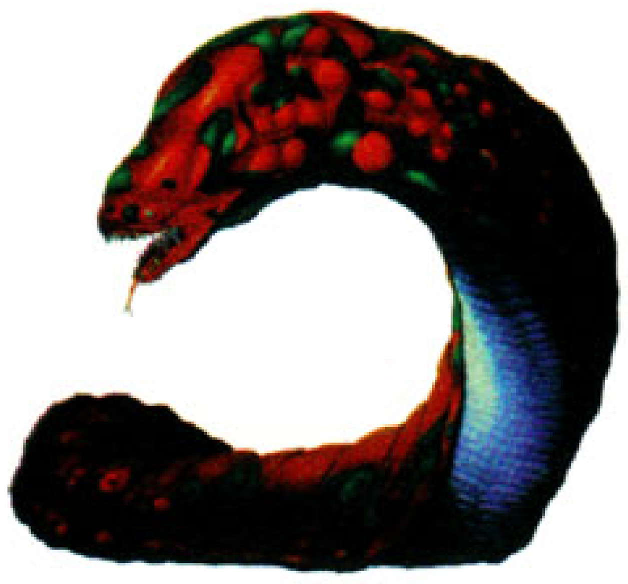




CHIMERA

Appearing towards the end of the game in the power generator rooms, the Chimeras are the result of yet another disastrous laboratory experiment. A lethal and deadly opponent, the Chimeras not only patrol the floors of the tight corridors but also the ceilings, occasionally swinging down to attack their prey with their vicious claws. Naturally this makes targeting the genetically mutated monsters very difficult indeed, which invariably leads to heavy ammo losses. So STARS operatives are best advised to simply avoid the Chimeras at all costs with some nifty foot work. However, if players find themselves cornered by one of these genetic mutations, several rounds from a Colt Magnum or bazooka should do the trick.





GIANT SNAKE
As a result of a genetic experiment with growth serums, a seemingly ordinary snake was transformed into a giant monster far bigger than the cages designed to enclose it. The giant snake is encountered twice throughout the game and is the largest genetic mutation roaming the mansion. STARS' operatives who are bitten by the snake, will find their bloodstream infected with a deadly poison unless treated immediately with an anti-poison vaccine (hint).>>



CROW
The crows are a surprisingly hostile enemy which fortunately are only encountered twice throughout the STARS' exploration of the mansion. Much of the time they remain passive to the STARS's exploits, but make a mistake and the aggravated flock of crows swoop down with great haste to peck their prey to death. Just ask Forest Speyer of Bravo team. To cull the flock, STARS' operatives are best advised to blast them with a raised shotgun, often taking out several at once.



The zombies are the most common enemy which players face throughout their adventure, as they stagger around the mansion with strips of torn flesh hanging off their rotting corpses.

The giant spiders spit out an acidic vapour at Chris, who does his best to fend them off with the awesome shotgun.





ers get the very best conversion possible.

Other small changes for the Saturn version of Resident Evil include improved loading times, especially on the save game screens allowing for quicker saves and less breaks in the scenario. In addition, Capcom have taken the time to improve the backgrounds of the Saturn version, adding more detail to the already highly detailed originals giving them more depth than before and making them looking quite brilliant.



THE TYRANNY OF EVIL CENSORS

Saturn Resident Evil is going to be massive when it finally reaches our shores around September time, with our only concern at the moment being the vast amount of bloodshed. Put simply, the amount of spurting red stuff throughout the game is unparalleled in any other videogame ever, which was clearly a cause of concern for Sony last year when releasing the PlayStation version. The game appeared destined to receive an 18 certificate, thus limiting the potential audience of the game somewhat. Sony eventually opted to remove some of the more gory scenes from the FMV intro to enable the game to receive a 15 certificate from the BBFC, giving the game more mass market appeal. This certainly didn't detract from the superlative gameplay, in fact the majority of UK gamers were oblivious to the fact that they were playing an edited version of the Japanese original. It's just that the extra scenes are necessary to heighten and intensify the feeling of terror.

Well, at the time of writing, Sega's position on such matters is unclear. With the recent news that Sega are keen to release the rather naughty Duke Nukem 3D in its entirety, we're hopeful that the full unedited version of Resident Evil will be the version UK Saturn owners receive. Of course, this would mean an 18 rating would be slapped on the game, in which case we'll be printing a player's guide on how to fake your birth certificate in order to obtain a copy.

COMING SOON...

Saturn Resident Evil is currently in an 80% complete form with a fair amount of work still remaining for the programming team. Although the main game is now in place and virtually finished, the much-hyped Saturn specific features have yet to be included. Despite this omis-



After dropping down from the ceiling, the giant spider corners the worried-looking Jill.



Several shotgun rounds later and the giant spider explodes with splatters of green blood.



The ruptured belly of the spider pops open, allowing the poisonous baby spiders to escape.

POP A CAP IN ITS ASS

The range of weapons in Resident Evil have been included to enable STARS operatives to effectively tackle the diverse range of genetically mutated monsters, with each being accompanied by some satisfyingly meaty sound effects.



COMBAT KNIFE The standard piece of kit for STARS operatives, the combat knife is a last resort weapon. Though effective at tearing into flesh, the proximity needed to use it renders players vulnerable to an enemy mauling.



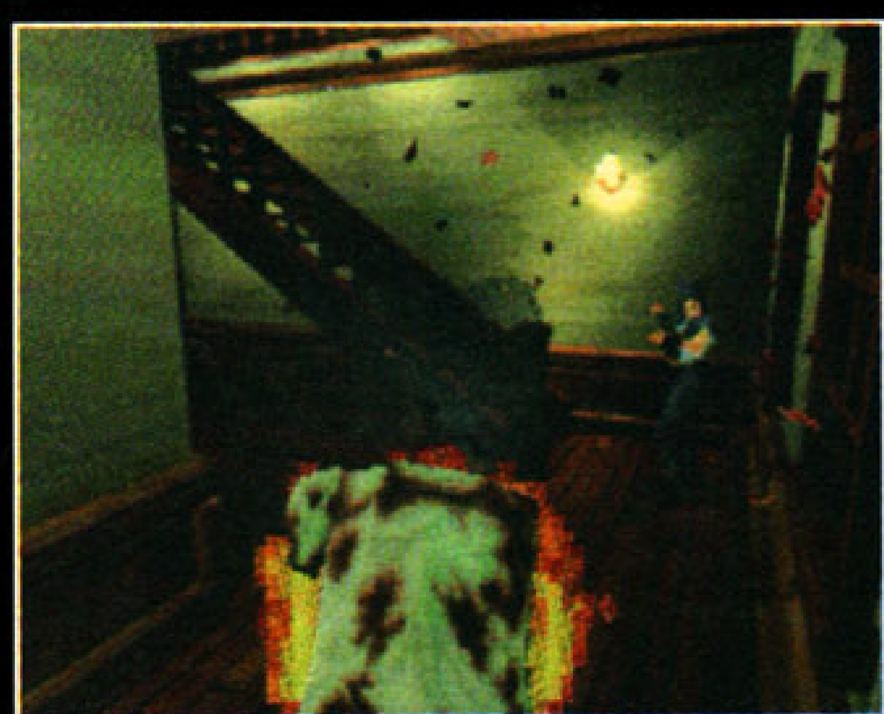
BERETTA The first firearm which becomes available is the Beretta, which is capable of firing off several rounds in quick succession. Its effectiveness is rather limited with six or seven shots required to take down the weakest of monsters.



SHOTGUN Some of the most gruesome and shocking scenes ever witnessed in a videogame become apparent once players have located the whereabouts of the shotgun, with the head of a zombie is taken clean off with a single shot.



BAZOOKA The bazooka is only available to Jill and has three different types of ammo (fire, acid and explosive rounds) which are best stored until facing one of the larger creatures in the mansion, such as the huge Plant 42.

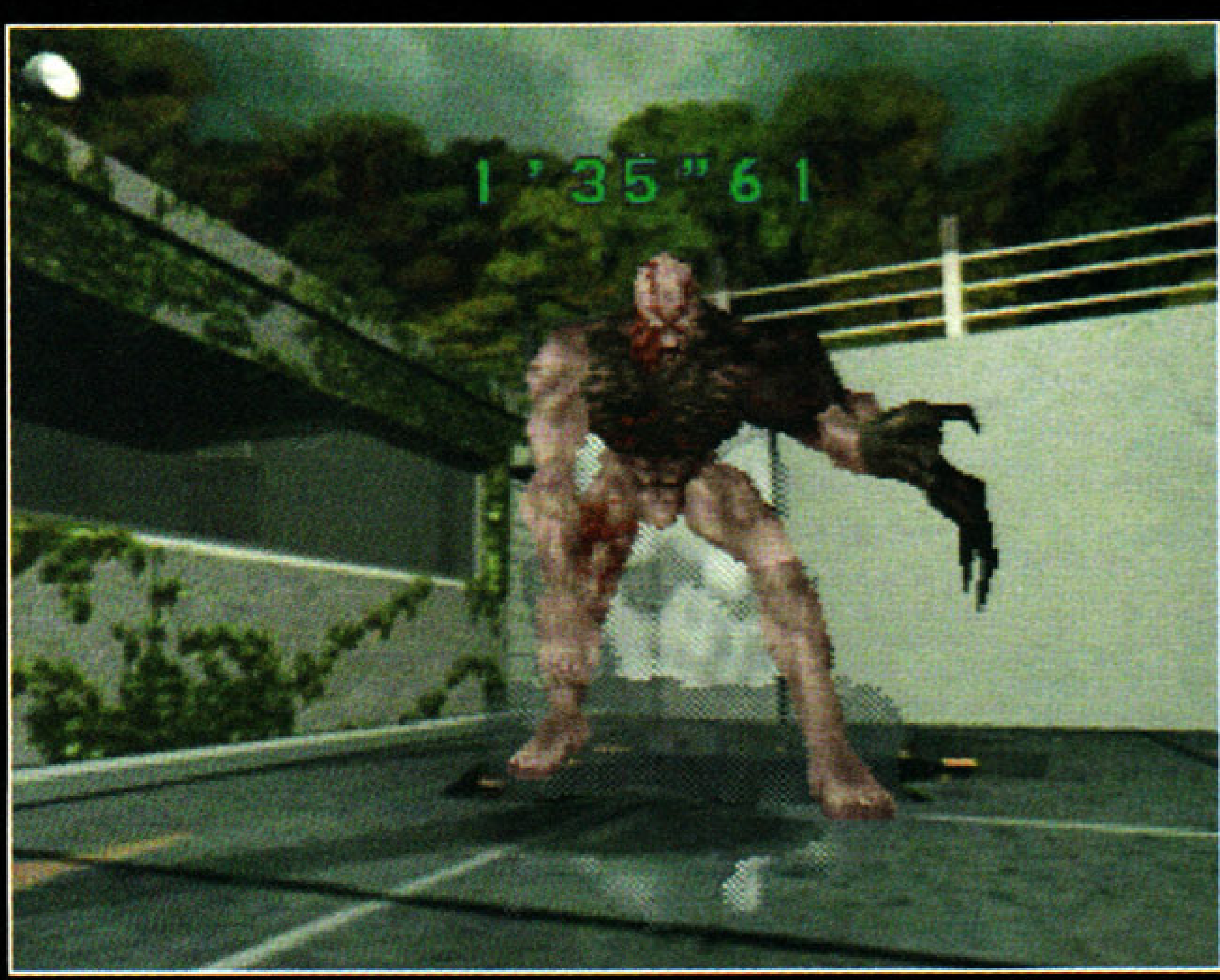


COLT The Colt Python Magnum is considerably more powerful than the Beretta and even the shotgun, though ammo is frighteningly scarce. The Colt is most effective against the Hunters where a single shot at will bring about an end to their life.



FLAME THROWER The flame thrower becomes available towards the end, where it proves effective against the Giant Spiders. However, it is also used to activate the door locking mechanism, so is only used at certain points in the game.

sion, the game is scheduled for a late July release in Japan with a PAL version to follow shortly after. Bearing in mind that all the translation work has already been done, we're expecting a top PAL version to arrive in this country around September time. However, unlike most of Capcom's UK releases, Virgin aren't handling this one. Instead Sega themselves are going to the trouble of publishing it the Saturn rendition of Resident Evil. Clearly they're expecting big things from Capcom's awesome horror-fest title and from what we've seen already, they could well be right. If everything goes to plan, we should have a finished copy of Resident Evil in time for the exclusive review in the very next issue of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE. And who knows, after that maybe a player's guide to get you through the impending horrors. Be sure not to miss it.









A quick trip to the bathroom now seems like a bad idea.





TYRANT

The grand finale to the long-awaited Saturn rendition of Capcom's awesome horror-fest sees the unleashing of not one, but two Tyrants. A genetically engineered killing machine, the Tyrant was created to be the ultimate life force. Clearly something went wrong. The huge Tyrant is extremely fast, attacking opponents with a devastating series of claw swipes before finishing off with an uppercut which skewers the victim. STARS operatives are confronted by a Tyrant on a number of occasions and are best advised to run away from this super creature, stopping occasionally to launch an attack. Players using Chris should use the Colt Magnum for this or the bazooka if proceeding as Jill.



I feel the need, the need for Speed... again!





The next six pages contain information which the feeble brains of PlayStation owners couldn't even begin to comprehend - namely confirmation that all of Sony's best games are now available on the Saturn! Futuristic hover-car pilot GARY CUTLACK checks out WipEout 2097.

These are happy times for Saturn owners. Not only are our numbers growing all the time thanks to the fantastic new £99 price point, but the Saturn definitely has the most impressive line-up of forthcoming software. The PlayStation autumn releases consist of the usual mass of tired, uninspiring sequels and shallow 3D graphic engines, while the Nintendo 64 doesn't even have a release schedule such is the lack of games on the disappointing 64-bit system. The Saturn seems to have come from behind to have the best software prospects - and now all of Sony's finest games are appearing on the Saturn as well! This is good news for Saturn owners, but bad news for us here at SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE, as we now spend large amounts of our time trying to work out WHY people are blindly buying PlayStations, when the Saturn clearly has the best games. Never mind, we know we've made the right choice, and here's another top reason to own a Saturn: WipEout 2097.





In the future, cars don't give off fumes. They expel nice shiny blue stuff instead.

HOVERCRAFT: VEHICLE OF THE FUTURE

Apparently, the vehicles in W2097 handle more like hovercraft than real cars, which is dead handy if you drive to work in a hovercraft every day, but as the use of hovercraft isn't really as widespread as hovercraft manufacturers would have us believe, most people will struggle to get to grips with the controls for a while. That's not to say the game is poorly designed, far from it, it's just that the combination of thrusters, air-brakes and devious twisty tracks make it a tough game right from the start.





There's no doubt that WipEout 2097 features some of the best visuals yet seen on the Saturn. It's all lovely and smooth as well!

SUPERSONIC TEAM

As I'm sure you can guess, the futuristic world of zero-gravity hover-car racing is very competitive, with five rival teams challenging for victory in the game. And similar to the original WipEout, each team's vehicle has its own strengths and weaknesses - the usual racing game balance of faster cars having less manoeuvrability is in place, but who needs a manoeuvrable car when you've got... weapons! Not just your common or garden weapons, but full-on futuristic technology. The basic rockets are obviously in there, but some of the more exotic hardware like the Thunder Bolt and the awesome Quake Disruptor can have a devastating effect on the opposition, but they do fire back - opposing drivers lay mines in your path to blow your car up, blatantly contravening the Highway Code, and causing major destruction all around. Also, on the later tracks they take some beating as well, >>





The tracks and scenery look great, with some well-designed cars to pilot.



A cool hover-car pushes for victory. 12th place won't impress the team boss.



Clever track design means no clipping problems in 2097.

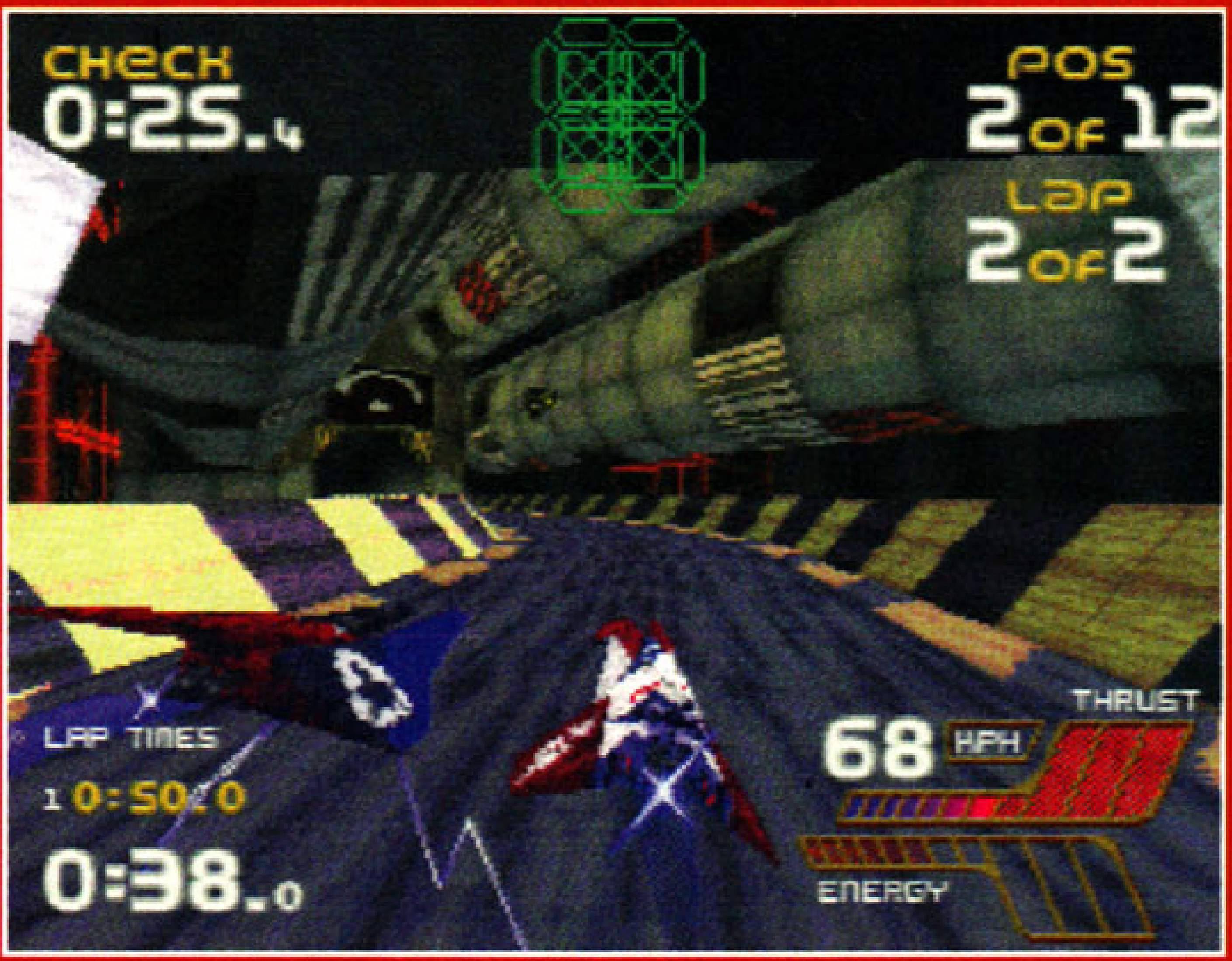


Crusing at 145kph, but still only in 12th place. Faster!





Smash into too many walls or get hit by enemy mines, and your shield will collapse. That means game over, you loser!





The sneaky 'turbo-start' allows you to make up a good few places at the start.





>> it'll take a mean hover-car pilot to beat the Saturn controlled opponents and open the 'secret' options.

GO FOR A SPEED BOOST

To stand a chance of achieving victory, it's very important to make use of the power-ups that are littered around the track. These take the form of coloured patches on the track surface, and special features are activated when you pass over them. They come in two flavours - speed boosts and weapon grids, but as the weapons are dished out at random it's usually best to go for a speed boost if given a choice, but only if you're confident you can handle the speed! If you're really a true speed-freak, one of the weapon options is a Turbo Boost which gives a massive injection of speed - use this with caution and only on straight sections of track, or you'll crash into the side, drain shield energy and lose all momentum. You may even explode in a fireball and die a painful death - or even worse, end up looking like Nikki Lauda for the rest of your life. So be careful, okay? Speed kills.

Top Tip: When using the air-brakes, release the throttle briefly for tighter turns.





THE AWESOME QUAKE DISRUPTOR

Have you noticed that the best weapons not only destroy things, but they also have the coolest names? Names such as 'Small Missile' and 'Little Gun' just don't strike fear into the heart of the enemy these days, so in the future all hardware will be given names like 'Electro Bolt' and 'Thunder Bomb' and what futuristic game would be complete without the awesome 'Quake Disruptor.' Each cool sounding weapon is represented by a different icon appearing at the top-middle of the screen, and it really is important to master the technology if you want to win. For example, if you save a Turbo Boost icon and use it just before a straight section of track, you can easily make up two or three places, sometimes even flying into the air and jumping straight over your opponents! The effects are impressive as well - especially the Quake Disruptor, which whips up the track in front of your ship, catapulting enemy cars into the air and smashing them back down onto the track! Believe me, you will love the awesome Quake Disruptor!

CRASHES TURN ME ON

Groovy futuristic hover-cars are quite delicate machines to be honest. Smash into too many corners, or get hit by a few enemy mines, and it's game over. However, these futuristic types think of everything, and they've thoughtfully provided all of the tracks with a special type of pit lane which you can drive through to recharge the car's shield energy, without even slowing down. And of course driving a hover-car means you don't have to worry about changing the tyres. What you do have to worry about, is steering. It's always useful to be able to steer in a racing game, and W2097 has many different steering options. Actually, it just has two - use the d-pad for normal cornering, and when a sharp turn is approaching, the two top buttons on the Saturn pad can









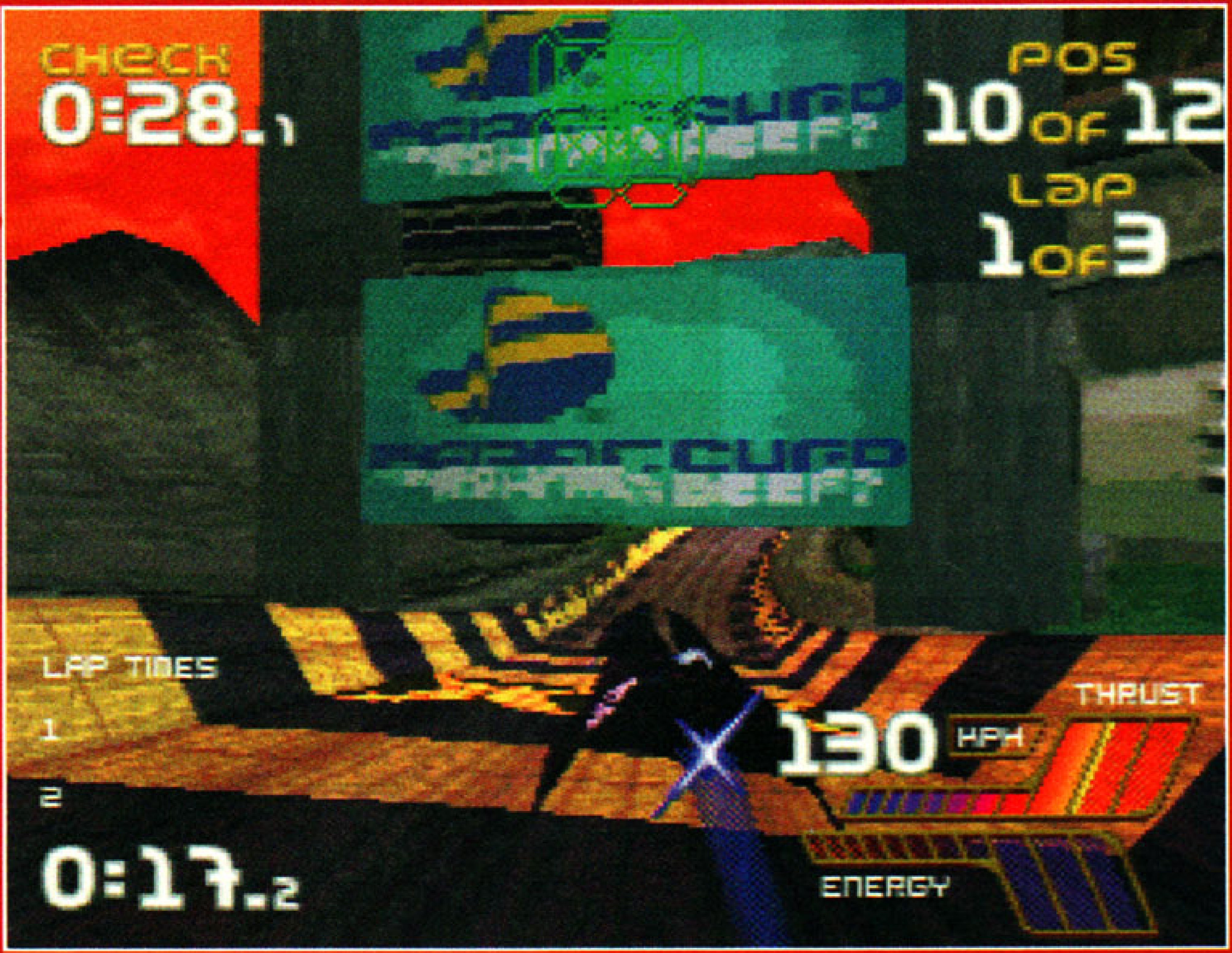
The opposing cars really fly through the race, giving little chance to view the cool logos and vehicles.

A fantastic view of the architecture (top) and recharging energy levels in the pit lane (bottom)



Hopefully, the weapon grid on the right of the track will give you a missile or something else destructive, ending the challenge of the Feisar car in front.

The landscape in WipEout 2097 really is incredible. Rolling, winding courses really test a player's piloting skills, while buildings and advertising banners give the tracks a claustrophobic feel.







Hmm... The slightly disappointing mesh effects are the only visual 'downer'.



be used as air-brakes along with the normal steering, which forces your vehicle to turn more suddenly, but they do slow you down a little. Not as much as slamming straight into a wall though, so you will need to master the delicate art of air-braking if you plan on being a serious contender. The d-pad can also be used to control the nose of your car, which is handy for landing gently after jumping over a huge bump in the track, and it also gives you a bit of extra control around tight corners.

YOU'VE GOT NO CLASS

There's no denying the challenge set by WipEout 2097. Initially the game gives you three classes of racing, with two tracks in each class - Vector, Venom and Rapier. Each class contains two tracks, with the two Vector courses being the easiest, and by the time you get to the expert Rapier class, you'll need to be a crack driver, otherwise the humiliation of defeat will be your only reward. Once you've become a seasoned racer, the game will award you with medals for your >>





Hedgehogs and frogs were ecstatic when the first prototype hover-cars were launched in 2056...

GANGING UP

To suit your driving skills, there are four teams to choose from. Each offers a car that handles slightly differently from the others, and once you get used to the twisty tracks and select a faster team such as Quirex, you really achieve some impressive speed as you fly around the tracks. Are there any top-secret teams with super-fast vehicles waiting for you to discover in the game? What do you think?

FEISAR

Hoorah for us, the Feisar team is the European entry, and probably the best all-round team for amateur racers. It's not the speediest car, but a good turning rating and strong shield make this ideal for bumping into walls as you learn the tracks.



AURICOM

Now we're talking. The American Auricom team like to put big engines into their cars, meaning it can go even faster than the Feisar and AG System's vehicles. This is advanced territory now - for professional racers only.











It takes a while, but by mastering the hover-car's controls, the game gets even better. Instead of slamming into the walls, you roll smoothly around corners.

Oh yes, there's also a time limit which eliminates slow racers from the action, thanks to the usual checkpoint system.





An impressive 241kph (top), an embarrassing 28kph (bottom).

>> achievements - get a gold medal by winning all of the six tracks in the first three classes and you're given the challenge of racing a full season over all six tracks. This really is a tough task, but definitely one worth sticking with... if you win the season, the game reveals more hidden options. Oh yes, I said more hidden options, because once you've completed the first extra mission yet more secret goodies appear! Now I don't want to spoil your fun by giving the game away, but I will anyway... there are two new extra hard tracks to race! Wahey!

INDUSTRIAL LIGHT AND MAGIC

Let's talk about the special effects. For a long time after its launch, people complained about the Saturn's poor performance in the visual effects department, but recently we've seen some very impressive demonstrations of what the Saturn really can do, and W2097 further proves the Saturn's hidden powers! The futuristic world is full of neon lights, explosions and glowing icons, all of which nicely light up your car and add a great deal to the look of the game. Unfortunately, despite some recent Saturn software having very good transparency tricks, nobody bothered to tell the W2097 team that they are possible, and as a result the old mesh problem appears. But it's hardly an important part of the game, and I feel embarrassed about mentioning it.

MEGA MEGA WIPE THING

As you know, the PlayStation versions of WipEout featured a huge list of top celebrity British bands, who provided some pumping futuristic music. The likes of the Chemical Bothers, Photek, Fluke, Underworld and the quite awesome Prodigy all contributed some ace tracks, and there was huge disappointment that the Saturn conversion of the original WipEout didn't feature the star turns. The Saturn sequel suffers from the same problem, and once again some decent replacement tracks have been produced, but whether they have the same 'kick' as the originals is debatable, but they're cer-

TALON'S REACH





SAGARMATHA





VALPARAISO



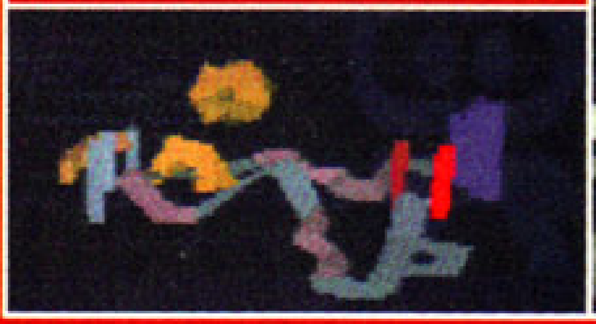


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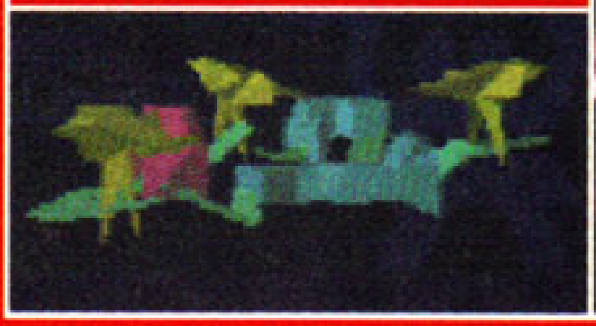


GARE D'EUROPA





ODESSA KEYS





tainly still decent tunes in their own right. But by the time you read this lovely feature the new Prodigy album should be out, so who wants to listen to game music anyway? We are the Firestarters. A special mention must go to the robot, computer or whatever it is that guides you through the action - a low distorted voice warns you when other cars have a weapon lock, and tells you when your shield is about to collapse, managing to sound rather manacing and futuristic, and also adding a huge amount to the atmosphere of the game. Not that the game needs extra atmosphere - the world in which you compete is incredibly well designed, with some tricky-but-not-too-hard tracks, and some very colourful and impressive graphics. And of course, a huge amount of cool logos.

NOW THE GOOD NEWS!

But don't worry readers! Whether you bought the original WipEout or not, we can assure you that the 2097 update seems to capture the playability of the PlayStation original very well, and thankfully one of the coolest games ever is now available for every Saturn owner to buy... or at least to consider buying... if you need some more advice to help you make a purchasing decision, turn to the review on page 72.

AG SYSTEMS

Those crazy Japanese are behind the AG Systems car, so it must be smaller, cheaper and better than the others? Well not quite, but it's more advanced than the Feisar, offering a higher speed, but it's a bit worse at cornering.



QUIREX

Do you want to prove yourself? If so request a transfer to the Quirex team. These hard-driving Russians make devastatingly fast cars, but they must have a lot of straight roads in Russia, as the steering isn't too hot. Speed-kings will love it.





12th place... but three more laps to prove your driving skills. Be brave!



This tunnel section is great for picking up some speed and a few extra places.



SUPER TEAM?

There are rumours in the racing world suggesting a new team is preparing to take the competition by storm. Talk of a secret vehicle with stunning stats has been heard, but they'll be looking for the very best drivers who have completely mastered the courses.





A weapon lock is imminent (above left), which should help secure fourth place.

HURT ME BABY

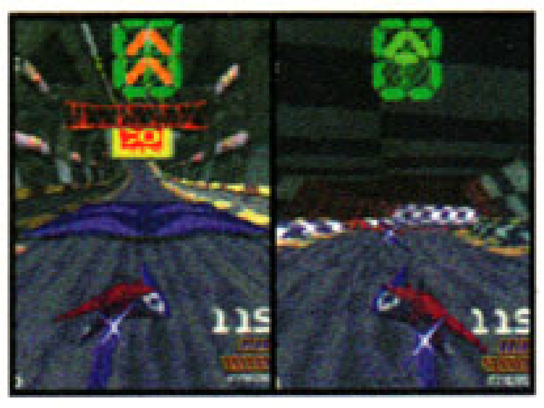
How do you tell which weapon you're currently using? You look at the handy icon shown in the top-middle of the screen of course. There may seem to be quite a few, but after a few hours play it's easy to recognise what hardware you're about to unleash onto the unsuspecting enemy, and weapons become an important part of the game.



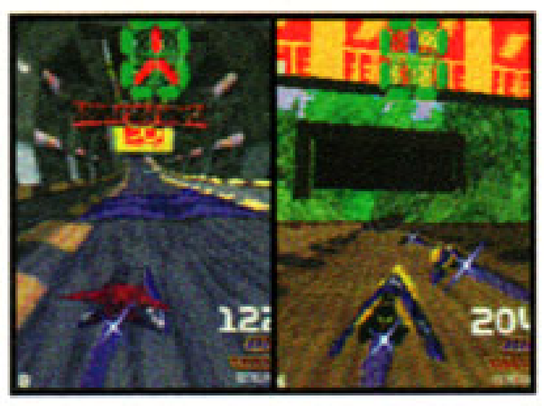
The star of the show, it's the legendary Quake Disruptor!



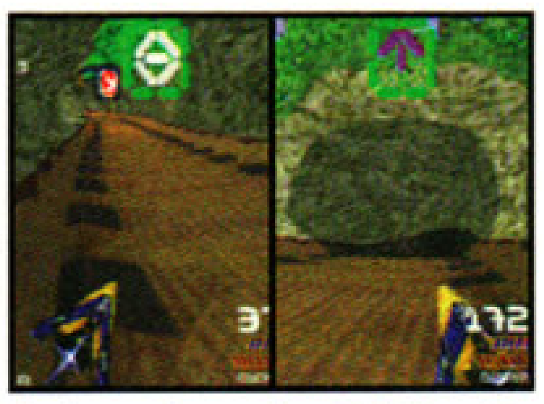
Mines (left) and the Electro Bolt (right).



Turbo Boost and the Auto-Pilot, displayed above.



The standard Missile and the Plasma Bolt icons.



Curious about the Shield and Homing missile? See above!



The Thunder Bomb and Energy Boost complete the line-up.



May the FORCE be with you!

If Shining the Holy Ark whetted your appetite for quality Sega RPG, the future just keeps getting better. For UK Saturn owners this will be their first chance to experience the awesome strategy/RPG hybrid that is Dragon Force. MATT YEO reports.

The Japanese have always had a healthy fascination with role-playing games, from the 8-bit NES adventures of Zelda to the recent million-selling epic of Final Fantasy VII, it would seem that mystical quests are the premiere choice for discerning Eastern gamers. Sega themselves have had an impressive RPG history with such classic titles as Team Sonic's Shining series, Lunar Silver Star, Mystaria and Dark Savior having all graced the Saturn and the promise of even a Panzer Dragoon adventure in the not too distant future. These titles have a huge following in Japan, with major releases receiving the kind of media coverage usually associated with major motion pictures, while massive queues patiently wait for >>



When play switches to the Battle Mode, all hell breaks loose! Combat in Dragon Force is unusual for an RPG with hundreds of animated sprites fighting each other simultaneously when armies clash.







>> their next dose of quality RPG action. To Western audiences, this level of adulation may seem slightly bizarre but these titles have the kind of depth and intricate gameplay that demands admiration. However, the time and development resources required to translate Japanese text to English is seen by many companies as financially unrewarding. Fortunately, in an effort to satisfy RPG hungry UK gamers, Sega have had the foresight to release a number of titles recently, including the awesome Shining the Holy Ark, and have now turned their sights to Working Designs' Dragon Force

ENTER THE DRAGON

While the name may seem familiar, Working Designs are not hugely well known. In actual fact, their self-appointed task is to license Japanese RPGs, translate them to English and then release them in the States (and then subsequently license them on to Sega Europe). With Dragon Force, the company looks set to impress international Saturn owners and converts to the game can also look forward to such future releases as Albert Odyssey and (hopefully) Magic Knight Rayearth. Unlike traditional mission and quest based RPGs, Dragon Force adds a large slice of strategy to its mix, with players controlling not just a handful but an entire army of fantasy characters defending their individual kingdoms and exploring the enchanted island of Legendra. From an overhead map, commanders guide their forces across the land, righting wrongs, engaging enemies, expanding their nation's borders and unravelling the game's lengthy plot. While many standard strategy games are merely faceless, mission-orientated, territory-grabbing Command & Conquer style titles, Dragon Force's storyline plays an all-important role, affecting the outcome of the game and the development of all its characters.



It's a picture postcard isn't it? The enchanted island of Legendra where all the action of Dragon Force takes place.

THE DRAGON FORCE LEGACY

"The bountiful land of Legendra was moulded from ashen waste and given the breath of life by the six goddesses. But it was not simply given life alone. Astea, the foremost goddess, fostered a special love for the new creation and blessed it with a sky bright and pure and lush, rolling hills that spread from ocean to sparkling ocean. The people of Legendra rejoiced that they had found favour with Astea and life was good. However, as with all such tales bordering on morality plays, one lay in wait to cast a dark shadow on the prosperity and tranquillity of Legendra. That one, from time uncounted, was called Madruk. He and his villainous legion scorched the land and dried the once sparkling seas with a burning fury unequalled in all creation. The hate gnawing at his black heart moved him to attempt nothing less than the complete annihilation of the beautiful land that Astea and her sisters had created. Before the cruel hand of Madruk, the people of Legendra had no hope of survival. Broken and despondent, they prayed fervently for a miracle.
Suddenly, the sacred dragon Harsgalt lunged forth to block Madruk's advance. Enraged, Madruk turned his fiery ardour to Harsgalt. The battle between the holy dragon and the wicked god seemed to be without end. In its wake, the winds howled,





The Dragon Force legacy is revealed in a stunning opening sequence. Below: The dragon Harsgalt battles Madruk. >>



On-screen text messages update players as combat unfolds.





Dragon Force uses a complicated menu system (left) to organise troops and fight battles (rigtht).

SHOWCASE



GALAM
Stubborn and inflexible yet respected as a skilled knight.



MISTAL
Often mistaken as a woman, this samurai fights for Izumo Nation.



ZAGAT
Samurai warrior and second-in-command of the Izumo armed forces.



NINA
Highland priest and healer. Also an effective fighter during battle.



LINK
Wein's best friend and talented sword-swinger, if slightly immature.









the oceans crashed and the vast land trembled violently. The battle lasted for a thousand days and in the end Harsgalt had only enough strength to lock Madruk into a sleep that would keep just long enough for eight chosen heroes to be born. Now, that time is upon us. The final confrontation rushes forth..."

MENU MASTERS

During the game, play is split between the Administration Mode and the Battle Mode. When beginning a new adventure, players select from one of the eight available kingdoms on the island, each of which is guided by a particular king, lord or military commander. As the story of Legendra states, eight chosen heroes are also found within the ranks of the armed forces but these characters only come to prominence when certain goals have been achieved or objectives reached.

Once a main character and nation has been chosen, players are required to tend to their kingdom's needs by organising military forces, consulting with generals and ensuring that all castles have been fortified before exploration of the surrounding land begins. The game then switches to a simplified overhead map and, by employing a cursor, scrolling over the detailed 3D landscape reveals enemy locations, rival territory and the number of towns and fortresses under a player's jurisdiction. As with the Administration Mode, guiding troops to specific areas and engaging in combat is accomplished by progressing through a number of menus allowing players to deploy a set number of soldiers, direct them to an objective, reinforce depleted divisions and interrogate captives. The Battle Mode is initiated when either a player's or an enemy's force attempts to storm an occupied castle or if warring parties encounter each other while on route to locations. Before actual combat begins, the Battle Preparation screen appears, with the CPU selecting its champion and player's using their strategy skills to choose a general with which to fight as. Each opposing force is allocated a set number of troops, ranging from knights and cavalry divisions to the specialised talents of ninjas and magicians, and these must be organised in the most effective manner in order to win the day. For instance, a successful defence pattern will enable crafty commanders to hammer the enemy's forces yet leave enough soldiers behind in case of a breakthrough attack by beasts or thieves. Likewise, a straightforward charge manoeuvre may be enough to batter a strong warrior's health down before a general unleashes his magical weapons.



THE WINNER TAKES IT ALL

Battle Mode is certainly one of the game's most impressive sections with up to 200 soldiers battling against each other for possession of a castle, for their leader's favour or for their very lives. Combat begins with the camera zooming in on the enemy's forces, while their general issues a hearty battle cry. A player's side receives the same dramatic treatment before selecting whether to advance, retreat, regroup, disperse, select special moves or change the camera angle. Then all hell breaks loose as



Wein unleashes his devestating Thunder Storm assault. Magical attacks are perfectly acceptable during combat but only generals can pull them off.



Battles may look like organised chaos but the game's detailed menu system allows leaders to effortlessly guide the action from a safe distance.

By using the joypad and certain buttons, players can zoom into and out of the action. The simple display on the left of the screen shows the relative position of troops and their leaders.







both forces charge at each other, slashing and hacking away in order to reach and defeat the mighty general himself. While this chaos rages around them, the commanders have the ability to launch their own attacks, which usually involve some spectacular pyrotechnics including Street Fighter style Sonic Booms, spinning tornadoes, fireballs and enchanted weapons. If both forces are defeated, the generals themselves are called up on to settle the matter in a one-on-one duel. The battle concludes with relevant statistics being displayed, including troops captured, health and magic points gained or lost and the loser either retreating in shame or having their territory seized. During combat, a number of other deciding factors come in to play, with terrain, the ability of certain soldiers to dominate others and spell levels all influencing the outcome of the battle. Following a skirmish, players are summoned to deal with matters of state once more, rewarding brave generals with medals, extra troops and superior weapons while captives may be approached and asked to fight on your side (assuming the price is right of course). Experience points enable players to expand their forces by employing more powerful soldiers such as harpies, zombies and dragons.

WARRIORS OF DESTINY

For newcomers to this style of game, the thought of endless menus and scrolling text may seem a little overwhelming but, with initial battles acting as a sort of training mode, Dragon Force soon opens up, revealing its full potential. Players find themselves taking great risks in order to expand their kingdom, face crushing defeats in order to learn humility and gain experience from strategic decisions. Exploration of Legendra reveals a multitude of enemies and a threat to the entire island, but by defeating certain enemies or uniting with others it's just possible you may save the day from the ancient evil that is awaking from its centuries of slumber...





The Map screen shows surrounding territories, troop destinations and enemy objectives. Encounter an oppossing army or enter a castle and battle begins.









The Battle Preperation screen gives both sides the chance to select a general to lead their troops into combat. Once chosen, fighters sneer and posture at each other, convinced that only they themselves are worthy warriors.



SHAIA
An outstanding priest who uses her vicious magic during combat.



GARYUS
An ex-Monk and wandering fighter currently allied with Topaz.



GULEN
Saved from death by Queen Teiris, Gulen now owes her his life.



REINER
A pacifist at heart, Reiner is a powerful, if outlandish, magic user.



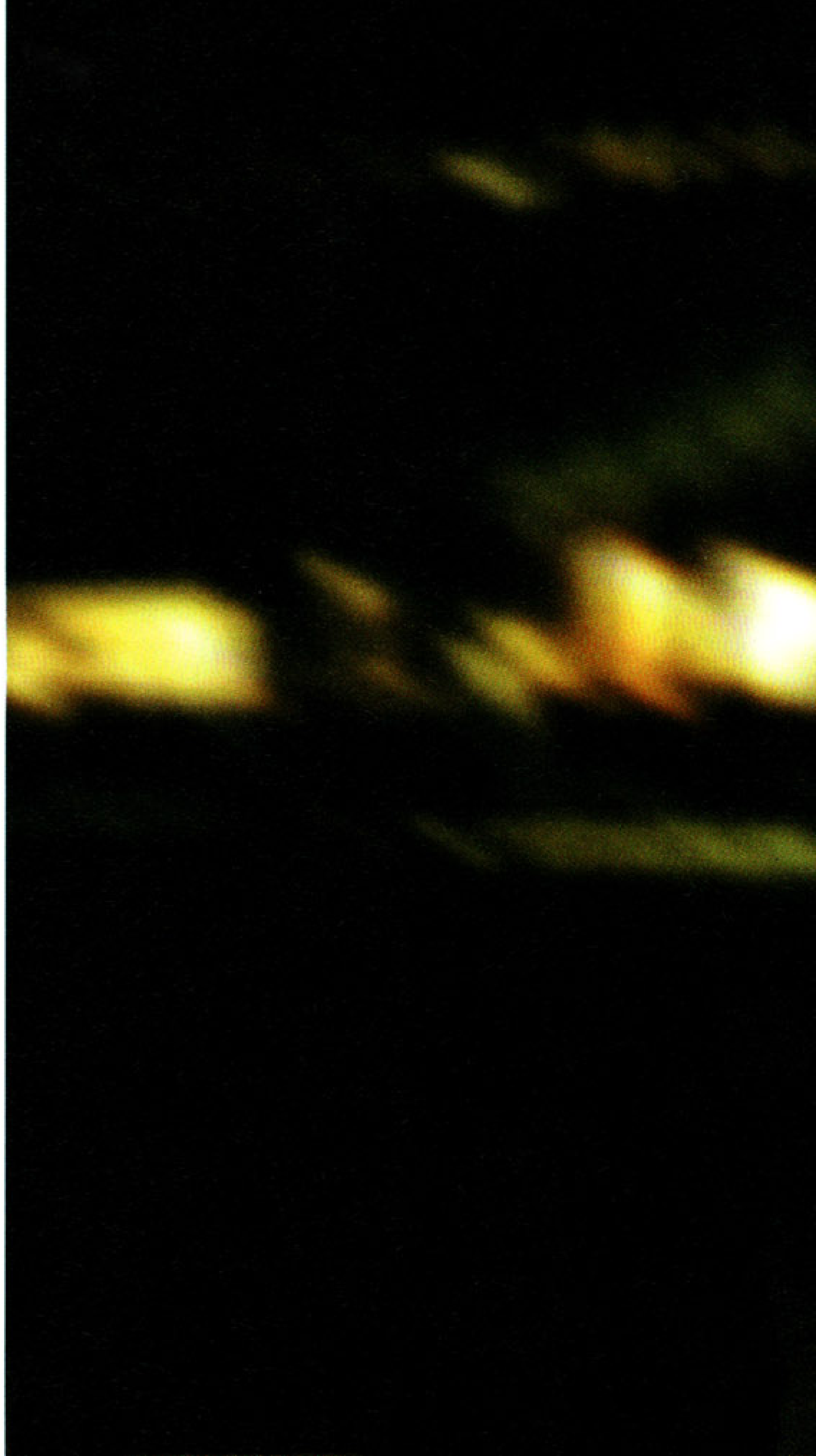
SCYTHE
A violent woman who shares a strange link with Scar of Tristan.

A Bronx Tale!





Barely a month has passed since we checked out the very first playable Saturn version of AM3's incredible Last Bronx. Continuing our unrivalled coverage, this month we have taken delivery of a 60% complete version of the game and it's incredible! At last Saturn owners can look forward to a beat 'em up visually superior to the mighty VF2. LEE NUTTER investigates further.







So you want crisp, high-resolution graphics better than VF2? You got it!

Many have tried but few have succeeded in emulating the success of AM2's superlative arcade beat 'em ups. It's hardly surprising when you consider they invented the genre in the first place with the superb Virtua Fighter. Subsequently they have gone on to compound their success with two more additions to the series and a number of spinoffs, amongst them Virtua Fighter Kids and Fighting Vipers.

So it may come as a shock to learn the latest Sega beat 'em up which looks assured to take the Saturn by storm this year has not emerged from within the labs of AM2, but from their colleagues and rivals at AM3. Made famous for producing the awesome Sega Rally, Manx TT, Virtual On and more recently Top Skater, AM3's Last Bronx looks set to do the business on the Saturn.

The game is set around the turn of this century in the seedy underworld of down town Tokyo, where gangs of youths roam the city streets at night in search of violence and corruption (sounds like Barking on a Saturday night). However, tired of their followers fighting skirmishes across the city, the leaders of each >>


BUCO
SHOTT
US





The collision effects in Last Bronx are quite spectacular, with no ugly, pixelated transparencies.





TOMMY
Tommy has one of the longest weapons of the eight fighters (oo-er), which gives him a greater range to catch opponents with the end of his pole (oo-er again). He is one of the easiest characters to master with simplistic combination attacks resulting in much reward for little effort.

>> of the rival gangs have decided to face off in one almighty battle for supremacy. The winner inherits the others' territories, uniting the rival factions and controlling the city of Tokyo at the turn of the 21st century...

LETHAL WEAPON

When creating Last Bronx, AM3 were careful not to produce just another VF clone. Instead they produced a game which steered clear of the traditional martial arts influence of VF and focussed predominantly on being a more speedy, violent and brutal beat 'em up. As such, a lot of the hand to hand combat of previous Sega beat 'em ups has been ditched in favour of the inclusion of weapons. Every one of the eight fighters benefit from the addition of weapons capable of inflicting huge amounts of damage on opponents. Nunchukas, tonfas, mallets, double-sticks and a wooden sword are just a few of the awesome weapons featured in Last Bronx.

As a consequence, the feel of Last Bronx is very different indeed to any other Saturn beat 'em up. Though the standard punch, guard and kick control method of VF has been retained, by and large the combo system and method of combat are quite different. Total mastery of the game involves learning the art of floating attacks, something which will seem familiar to VF veterans but was largely absent from MegaMix due to the mid-air recovery move. The process of floating involves sending your foe flying into the air, where they are completely defenceless and can't retaliate. Once your opponent is airborne, pummelling their defenceless body with a devastating and relatively simple multiple-hit combination attack is the way to victory.

The fights themselves take place in a variety of settings around the Tokyo location, with each of the rings being enclosed by barriers. This means no more cheesy VF-style ring outs, with the only way to victory being through a KO. Unlike Fighting Vipers however, the barriers cannot be destroyed or overcome but it is possible to climb them before launching an aerial attack on opponents.

ARMED AND DANGEROUS

Graphically speaking, AM3's awesome Last Bronx has been the subject of intense speculation since the Saturn conversion of the game was announced. Rumours of high-resolution characters and



YOKO
Aside from being one of the best looking characters in Last Bronx, Yoko is possibly one of the most accessible to newcomers with a simple range of floating and PPPK combinations to master. Her sheer power and effective use of her Tonfa weaponry make her a desirable fighter to master.







The biggest and most powerful fighter in Last Bronx is the huge hammer-wielding Zaimoku, who's about to give Tommy a severe beating here, methinks.



After the absence of blur effects on the Tokyo Toy Show demo version of Last Bronx, the outcry was so great that AM3 immediately programmed them in.

Right: Kurosawa is the most astonishingly brutal fighter in Last Bronx with some incredible weapon-based combination attacks and bone-crunching throws. Below: Yusaku on the other hand, is considered to be the hero of Last Bronx and is likewise an awesome fighter with a range of devastating Sansetukon attacks.







3D backgrounds were touted and finally SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE is able to lay such matters to rest. Suffice to say, Saturn owners owners can breathe a sigh of relief as graphically at least, Last Bronx shows every sign of surpassing the mighty VF2 and becoming the most accurate Model 2 coin-op conversion to date.

The good news is that each of the eight combatants of Last Bronx are portrayed in the Saturn's high-resolution mode. For a while there was some doubt as to whether this would be the case, as the recent trend within Sega has been to opt for low-resolution characters but with the addition of light-sourcing. Though the Saturn works much harder to do this, the game has a much rougher overall appearance than glorious high-resolution visuals, invariably leading to criticism. However for the Saturn conversion of Last Bronx this wasn't so much of an issue as oddly, not even the arcade version had light-sourcing. Instead each of the fighters exhibited superior textures to give them a solid 3D look.



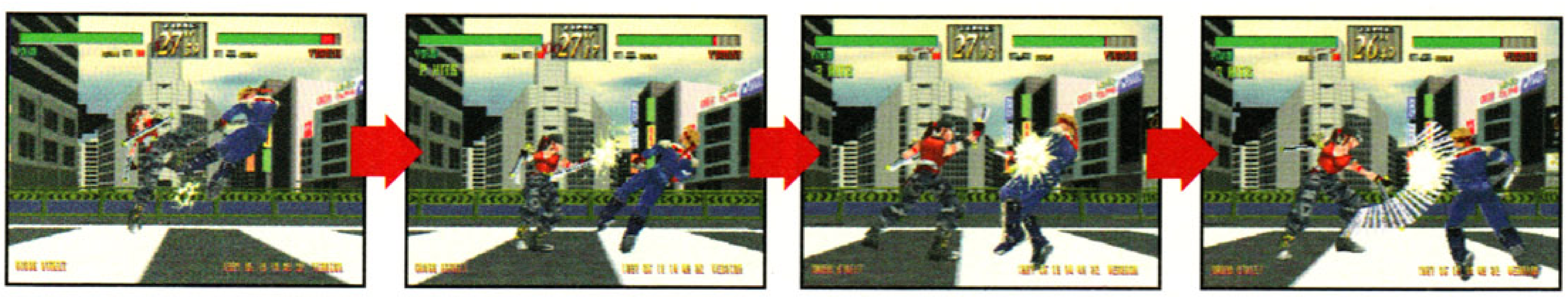
As a result, each of the high resolution characters in the Saturn version are extremely detailed and look remarkably similar to their arcade counterparts.

The 60% complete version we've received of Last Bronx features all the stunning blur effects on the super-fast weapon movements. Especially impressive is the likes of the triple-Nunchuka combo and some of Tommy's pole-based attacks as they leave some huge spiralling blur effects in their wake. Accompanied by some awesome 70s Kung-Fu movie-style sound effects, the overall impression of the early version we have is extremely impressive indeed. Best of all, is even at this stage in development the game engine runs at a fluid 60 frames per second, that's the same speed as Saturn VF2 and the arcade version of Last Bronx!





The range of backgrounds is stunning, with the best still to come!



The key to success when playing Last Bronx is undoubtedly mastering the art of floating attacks. As demonstrated above by Yoko, this involves sending your opponent flying into the air and immediately following up with a devastating combination attack whilst they are completely defenceless.



KUROSAWA

Bearing more than a passing resemblance to Axel Rose and with similar violent tendencies, Toru Kurosawa is one of Last Bronx' most brutal fighters. His triple punch combinations prove lethal as he repeatedly bludgeons his foes around the head with a wooden sword.



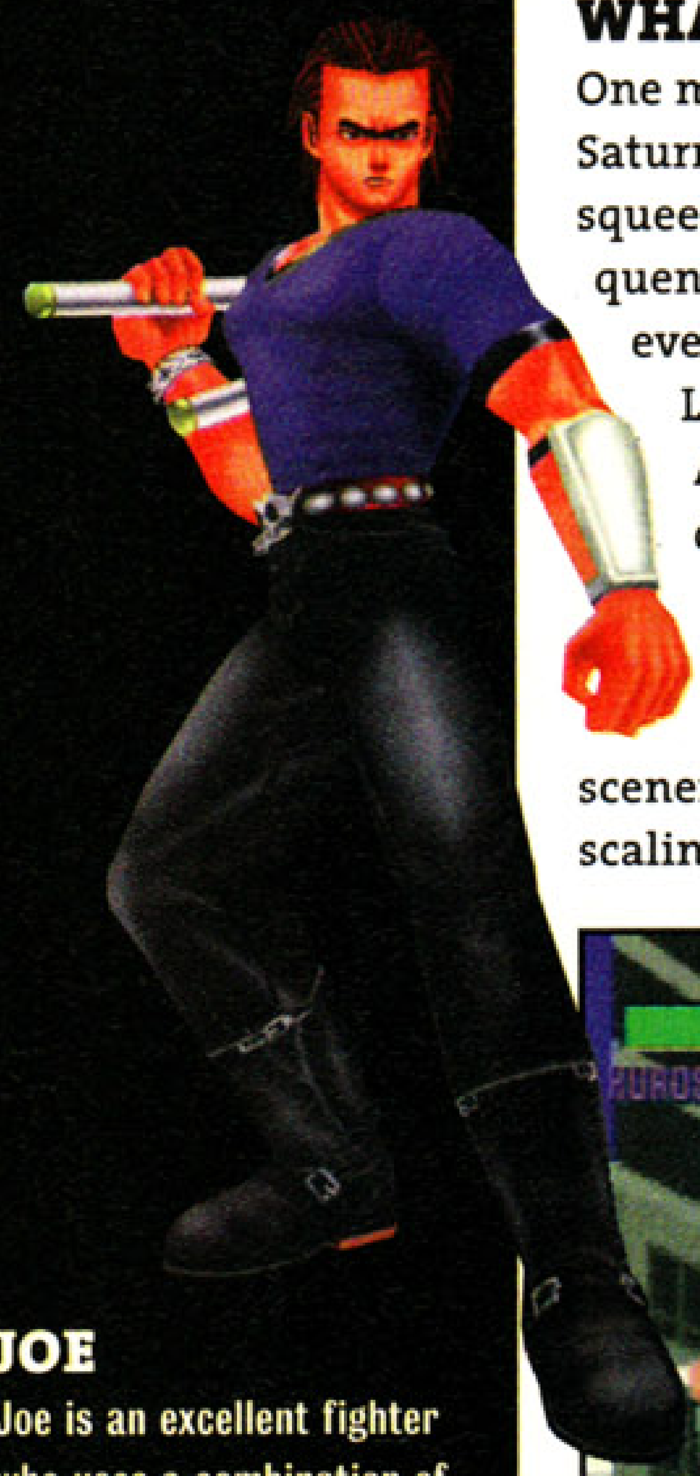
LISA

The youngest of the eight fighters, Lisa Kusanami is armed with a pair of double-sticks to batter opponents with and a devastating yet remarkably simple PPPPP combo. Lisa will no doubt be the focus of much interest upon the release of Last Bronx, as the jailbait fighter wears an incredibly short skirt.





ZAIMOKU
Another of Last Bronx' big hitters, Saburo Zaimoku is a frightening character who wields a giant mallet with devastating effect. His obvious weakness is in his lack of speed, but more than makes up for it with his awesome power and devastating throws for opponents who get too close.



JOE
Joe is an excellent fighter who uses a combination of lethal Karate attacks and devastating Nunchuka moves to beat his opponents. Joe will undoubtedly come to the attention of the censors when the game reaches this country, with his nunchukas likely to change to something a bit less illegal.

WHAT ABOUT THE BACKGROUNDS?

One major compromise in bringing AM3's Last Bronx to the Saturn regards the backgrounds. The coin-op managed to squeeze every last ounce of juice out of the Model 2 board, consequently the backgrounds were some of the most spectacular ever seen. Stages such as the Lust Subway and Radical Parking Lot for example, featured ceilings, whereas the Naked Airport had huge jet planes taking off. Naturally these are difficult to replicate on the Saturn, although from what we've seen already, AM3 are doing a bloody good job.

However, in the few backgrounds which have been programmed in, gone are the incredible 3D buildings and scenery and in comes several layers of parallax scrolling and scaling to improve the depth. This may come as a disappointment to those expecting the full 3D monty, but to be honest the difference isn't so pronounced as the fully 3D barriers which enclose the ring tend to obscure the backgrounds. The overall effect is most impressive indeed, with the pseudo-3D backgrounds shifting around at an incredible rate and easily surpassing those of VF2 and FV.

IT'S ALMOST FINISHED!

At the time of writing, Last Bronx is in a 60% complete form with a great deal of work still remaining for the AM3 conversion team before the game is complete. The graphics need quite a bit of attention before they are up to scratch, with a few of the more complex backgrounds yet to be programmed in. How AM3 are going to cope with the jets taking off and ceiling levels is anyone's guess, but the



Yep, they may look 3D but in fact the backgrounds use some awesome parallax scrolling to produce the best backgrounds seen thus far on a Saturn beat 'em up.



Yusaki's three sectioned staff produces some awesome motion blur effects.



Illegal weapons and underage girls in short skirts. Yep, we love Last Bronx.








Each of the eight combatants in Last Bronx has a series of awesome throws with which to pummel their opponents into submission. Pictured above is Lisa, whose backwards, down, kick and guard throw sees her straddling her opponent before throwing them arse-over-tit onto the deck, where she emerges, sitting on her opponent's face. Certainly one of the more pleasurable throws in the game for the two fighters concerned.



team remain confident in producing a top conversion.

In addition, there's some irritating polygon glitching on the characters which has yet to be addressed and the shadows have still to be added. Likewise some of the collision effects and impact craters of downed opponents which made the arcade version of Last Bronx so visually stunning are still missing from the Saturn rendition, as are the all-important replays. But it's early days yet.

Though the gameplay appears to be spot on in our version of Last Bronx with all the moves and collision detection in place, the customisable game options and Saturn specific features are still to be programmed in. No clues have been given as to what form these may take, but expect the usual training and team battle modes to make their way through to the final version amongst others.

NUNCHUKA NUISANCE

The good news for beat 'em up fans is by the time you read this, Last Bronx should be complete. A finished version of AM3's brutal beat 'em up is expected to make an appearance at this month's E3 show in Atlanta, where no doubt it will woo the audiences into a state of shock. The finished version of the game is expected to hit the shops in Japan in July, with a full-screen, full-speed PAL translation heading for these shores around September/October time.

Slightly disappointing is the news that Joe's Nunchukas will be taken out for the UK release of Last Bronx, as the aforementioned weapon and images of are banned in this country. As in the recently released Soul Blade on the PlayStation, it is likely the Nunchukas will be replaced by a more censor-friendly weapon. However, though this alters the appearance of the game slightly, it has no affect whatsoever on the superlative gameplay. Conversely, huge homicidal sword-wielding maniacs such as the brutal Kurosawa are perfectly acceptable and will appear in their entirety.

Just a quick note on some amazing news which emerged this week. Last Bronx is strongly rumoured to be arriving as a double CD pack, though the reasons behind this move are as yet unclear. The entire game is set to appear on one of the discs, with the other containing secret goodies and modes. Though only speculation at this point in time, we're expecting something along the lines of a pseudo-RPG mode as seen in Namco's Soul Blade or even a CG artwork disc. But there's no firm word as of yet.

Rest assured such answers to the mysterious second disc and the complete lowdown on this awesome title will be forthcoming in the very next issue if all goes to plan!



The huge aeroplane in the background doesn't take off yet. But you never know...






Another of Kurosawa's bludgeoning attacks, this time with Tommy on the receiving end of his wooden sword. Still, looks pretty good doesn't it?



NAGI

Nagi Hojo is the Last Bronx combination queen, with an large range of PPPK-style combos and floating attacks with which to crush her opponents. Armed with a pair of Sais weapons, her speed and punishing combos make her a formidable opponent. Also the game scenario hints strongly at some Lesbian tendencies!



YUSAKU

The leather-clad Yusaku Kudo is one of the best fighters in the game, armed with a Sansetukon three sectioned staff. His weapon has possibly the greatest range of any of the fighters, making him a formidable opponent at any range.

SONIC JAM

Can you believe it? Sonic's back in the first of two games this year that are set to blow Saturn owners away! Phase one is the awesome Sonic Jam, a surefire contender for best retro pack ever!

BY	SEGA
PRICE	£34.99
STYLE	RETRO/PLATFORM
RELEASE	AUGUST

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

This is where the phenomenon began more than half a decade ago. The peaceful planet of Moebius is under attack from the evil Dr Robotnik and his Badnik creations. He has encased Sonic's woodland chums in a robotic shell and is sending them out to wreak havoc across the planet. As Sonic, players progress through each of the levels freeing Sonic's woodland chums, collecting Chaos Emeralds and eventually defeating Dr Robotnik. Sonic the Hedgehog became a massive success, especially in Europe and America where even today gamers have a fond affection for the blue hedgehog. His success prompted Sega to adopt him as their mascot and spawned an entire series of sequels.



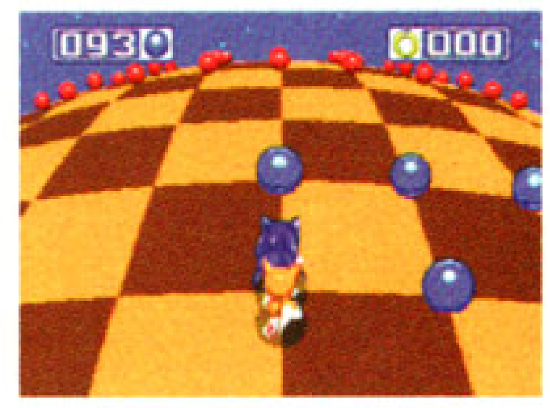


You can see right into the blinkin' distance with no clipping!



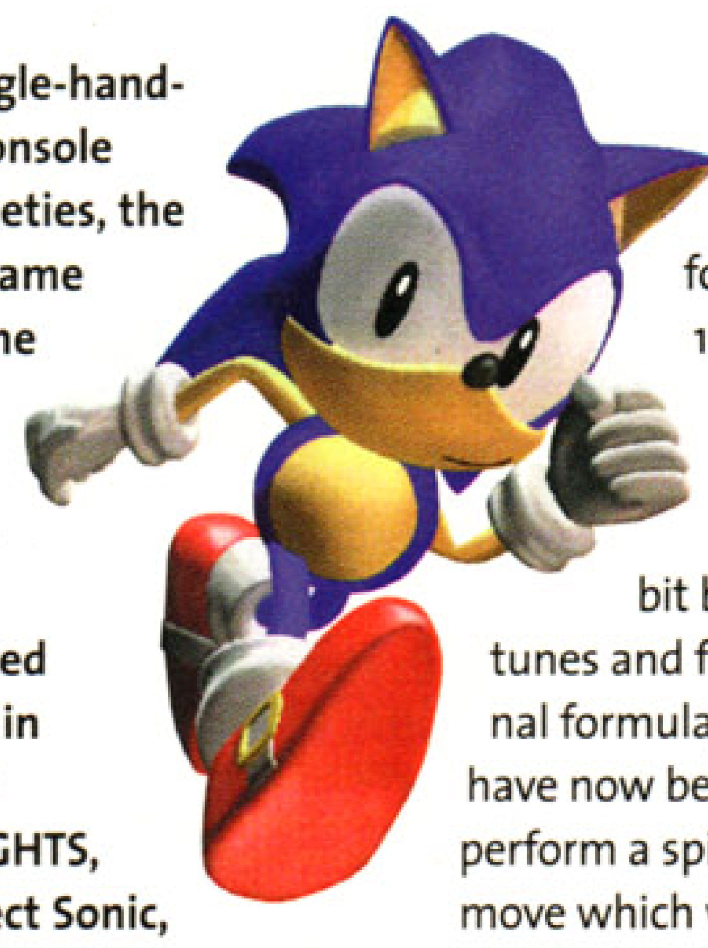


End-of-level boss action.



Get blue spheres in Sonic 3.

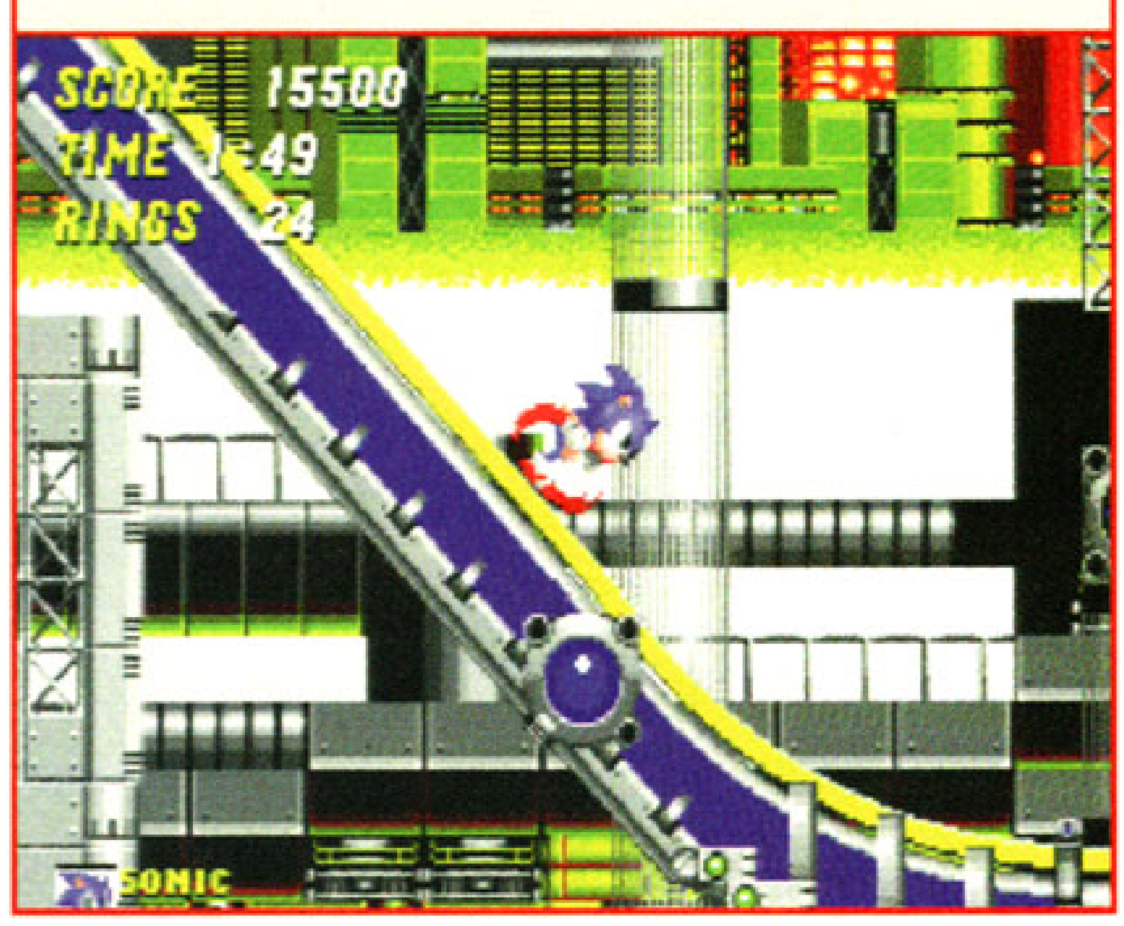
Sonic the Hedgehog single-handedly kick started the console market in the early nineties, the "Sonic Boom" as it became known. The original Megadrive game sold over 14 million copies and made Sega a massive force in the home entertainment market previously dominated by Nintendo. Subsequent Sega consoles and indeed Sonic games have failed somewhat in recapturing the success of the early nineties. So upon completion of NiGHTS, the Sonic Team set to work on Project Sonic, a two-pronged strategy to re-invent interest in Sonic and likewise in Sega. Phase one of Project Sonic is the amazing Sonic Jam, a retro gaming package featuring four of the Megadrive Sonic classics and an all-new 3D front end. The ground-breaking phase two of Project Sonic, (the proper Sonic game) is featured elsewhere in this earth-shattering edition.



In case anyone missed last month's massive showcase on this awesome pack, Sonic Jam basically consists of the four Megadrive classics Sonic the Hedgehog 1-3 and the backwardly compatible Sonic and Knuckles. Each of these landmark titles have been perfectly replicated onto the Saturn looking identical to their 16-bit brethren and including all of the original tunes and features. However, in addition to the original formula, several all-new gameplay enhancements have now been put into place. Players are now able to perform a spin-dash attack in the first Sonic game, a move which wasn't added to Sonic's repertoire until the sequel. A new time attack mode has been added, allow-

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 2

New for the sequel were improved graphics with more detailed backgrounds than previously, more speed, bigger levels and tougher gameplay. Whilst the scenario remained the same, Sonic is joined by his companion Tails, and benefited from a new move, the spin-dash attack. In addition the sequel has an awesome special stage and a cool split-screen two-player mode.









The river which runs through the middle of Sonic World features true transparent rippling water effects.



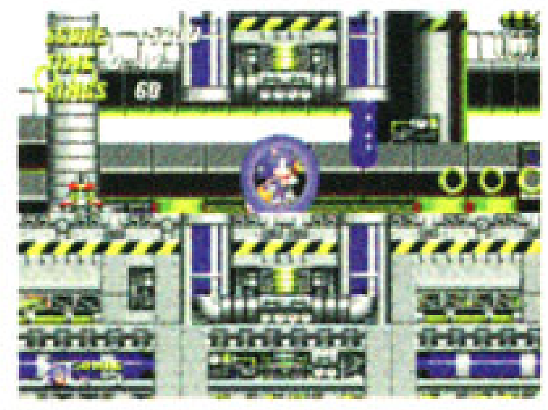
More water-based platform fun as Sonic is joined by his trusty companion, Tails.





The weaving camera strives to give players the best view.





The awesome phase one of Project Sonic is now complete and is truly amazing. We can hardly wait to see what delights phase two will conjure up.

ing players to race through each of the acts in a time-trial like way racking up the fastest possible times. In addition, players are now able to access the special stages from the options screen without having to play the game through.

Each of these superb titles combined simple gameplay with some of the flashiest graphics of the time, awesome speed which became Sonic's trademark and some unforgettable tunes. As a result the Sonic series has become one of the most successful in video game's history.

Perhaps even more remarkable however, is the all-new 3D front end entitled Sonic World. Clearly the focal point of the pack for many people, Sonic World features some of the most astounding graphics witnessed on the Saturn thus far, easily rivalling those of Mario 64. The luscious 3D environment is densely populated with trees, rivers with true transparent effects, rings, springs, platforms and even Tails. With no clipping or glitching whatsoever, the 3D engine is truly remarkable and quite possibly the same engine as is being used in the forthcoming Sonic title.

Within Sonic World players guide Sonic into various buildings, where they are able to access a vast array of Sonic related information. Hidden within the 3D environment are a huge selection of Sonic cartoons, Sonic CD endings, artwork, music, commercials, important facts and original sketches. In addition to the museum element of Sonic World, a quest mode is also available whereby players are required to perform a set number of tasks in a strict time limit, such as collecting rings and finding Tails. Successfully completing these tasks results in the player being rewarded with a secret of sorts.

Admittedly, Sonic Jam may not be everyone's cup of tea and is certainly not worth purchasing for those who already own the Sonic games. But for those who missed out on the Sonic phenomenon, Sonic Jam is an excellent purchase. And when you consider the superb price point that Sega have set, a piffling £34.99, Sonic Jam is an absolute bargain. Along with the excellent Sega Ages pack, Saturn owners truly have the two best retro packs around on any system.

LEE NUTTER

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG 3

The third installment of the series used a whole new engine, meaning the graphics were more refined and polished then ever before. Each of the levels are incredibly varied, benefiting from a better design than previously with more height being added to the usual horizontal gameplay. In addition to the stunning visuals, Sonic 3 has improved gameplay with an impressive range of new bonus stages. Other new additions included an impressive range of power-ups, awesome set-pieces and a new foe in the form of Knuckles the Echidna.



SONIC AND KNUCKLES

The Sonic and Knuckles game arrived as a plug-through cartridge with two ends, allowing previous Sonic games to be added. The combined cartridges add a number of features to previous Sonic games. The great news is that this "lock-on system" has been retained in the Saturn version. As a game in its own right, Sonic and Knuckles is perhaps one of the weakest Sonic titles. Being an evolution of the Sonic 3 engine, the game had little new to offer. The one notable exception being the return of Sonic's old foe, Knuckles the Echidna as a playable character with moves not available to Sonic, allowing him to reach previously inaccessible areas.



Quite simply the best series in videogames history on one disc! Coupled with the awesome front end and the low price point, you can't go far wrong with Sonic Jam.

graphics	85
sound	82
playability	92
lastability	91

overall **92%**

REVIEW

DRAGON FORCE

After what seems like an unbearable wait, Sega are finally ready to release Working Designs' Dragon Force. But after the awesome revelation that was Shining the Holy Ark can this strategy/RPG offer an equally impressive challenge?

BY	SEGA
PRICE	TBA
STYLE	STRATEGY/RGB
RELEASE	OUT NOW



A lone Beastman takes on the valiant Highland army.





When cold, hard steel fails, use magical powers to win battles.

It's clear, from the sheer deluge of phone calls and mail we've received, that UK Saturn owners are big Japanese RPG fans. The quality and depth of such titles as Dark Savior and Shining the Holy Ark are evidently just what you're looking for in a video game. None of this flashy PlayStation malarkey for you folks. Nosiree, you want some substance and longevity to the games you buy and if that means paying out over-inflated import prices for titles then so be it. Unfortunately, whereas beat 'em ups require very little translation, Japanese developed RPGs and strategy games tend to be extremely text heavy. UK software houses usually steer well clear of picking them up, for fear of poor sales, and Japanese companies often see the Western games market as negligible.

So plenty of back-patting must go to Sega Europe then for deciding to release Working Designs' Dragon Force, a more strategy led adventure but one with enough familiar RPG elements to make it seem less of a textbook war sim. Set in the enchanted island of Legendra, players take charge of one of eight mythical kingdoms and indulge in a series of grand battles and border skirmishes in order to expand their boundaries and increase their military might. According to the involving plot, the island was nearly decimated by the evil god Madruk centuries before until he was finally defeated by the legendary dragon, Harsgalt. Now that the kingdoms have had time to rebuild themselves, the sleeping god is beginning to wake from his slumber and only the power of a united island will be enough to stop him once and for all. However, this Tolkien-style storyline is only one of Dragon Force's many layers, each of which combines to form a complicated and often confusing game but it's





The battles are awesome to watch and, as they occur in real time, generals are capable of affecting the outcome of each skirmish

I'M THE STORY TELLER

Every so often, the action and exploration in Dragon Force is punctuated by some atmospheric story scenes which not only help to push the plot along but also introduce both major characters and events. These cut scenes also occur when two generals face each other in combat on the battle field to decide the outcome of a skirmish and are accompanied by plenty of macho posturing and shouting. As the story unfolds, it soon becomes clear that some characters have personal grudges against others while some share the same mysterious past and inevitable destiny...





With enough Magic Points, players can summon all manner of mythical creatures.



Hah, these peasents are no match for the might of our glorious cavalry! Ride on lads!



To save troops in battle, use archers to take out targets from a safe distance.



Persuade captives to fight for your forces.



This staggering amount of sprites is not only overwhelming but also a testament to the Saturn's 2D sprite handling abilities.


Ninjas are tough little buggers and take some beating.

KING OF FIGHTERS

A nation's armed forces is made up of generals who have command of various troop divisions. The ranks of these squads contain such individual characters as knights, spirit users, magicians, priests, monks, ninjas, beasts and even dragons all of whom have access to specific fighting powers and special abilities. By deploying their forces in one of eight set patterns, it's possible for players to attack the enemy in a number of ways. So for some conflicts, it's imperative for players to divide their forces, enabling raiding parties to break through enemy defences, while other missions require clever deployment of troops in order to surround and defeat an opposing army.





still one that offers days, if not weeks, of playing potential. Many of you may be put off by the thought of a menu driven strategy title but fear not for Dragon Force attempts to keep the action and adventure flowing at a fairly speedy pace, giving players access to the essential commands and icons they need at a moments notice. These menus obviously take up a major part of the game (hence the time it's taken to translate the game from its original Japanese form) and playing time is split between managing the needs of your kingdom and attacking rival nations. However, the actual administration of your chosen nation is kept to a bare minimum, with the main focus being on a player's military might and fighting abilities. These warmongering skills come into play when battle rounds begin and are a perfect showcase for the Saturn's sprite handling capabilities. Forget small bands of adventurers poking each other with pointy sticks and laughable magic spells, the combat in Dragon Force often consists of over 200 individual characters hacking and slashing their way across a texture-mapped landscape. These battles are awesome to watch and, as they occur in real time, generals are capable of affecting the outcome of each skirmish by deploying the correct amount of troops, selecting the right attack formations and by knowing when to retreat. Careful use of these commands, and a bit of clever strategy, are the deciding factors in these action-packed encounters. If a battle results in both forces being wiped out, the fighting then continues with a general from each side duelling each other in a one-on-one face-off. Time spent away from the battlefield is just as important though as it gives players the opportunity to recruit additional soldiers, award medals for bravery, expand the kingdom's borders, fortify castles and prepare the nation for the next major ruck.

Of course this fantasy themed title won't appeal to all Saturn owners and its shortcomings soon emerge. Long, drawn-out administrative sections will deter those players keen to get to the sprawling battles and major plot revelations, while the speed and ferocity of these skirmishes often results in hasty strategy decisions being made and poor judgment in combat. It could be argued that these failures will teach those less able players to understand the nature of controlling such a large military force but accessibility just isn't one of Dragon Force's strong points. If you're looking for a game that effortlessly blends strategy and RPG elements to create an involving, rewarding and time-consuming experience, Dragon Force is definitely well worth purchasing. But be warned, this is one Saturn title that highlights why most Japanese games of this style never see the light of day in the UK.

MATT YEO



"I say you are a cad, sir!" Generals duel to settle most battles.



The Highland cavalry takes a battering from a Mage attack.

Graphically detailed battle sequences and an involving plot give Dragon Force a unique strategy/RPG edge.

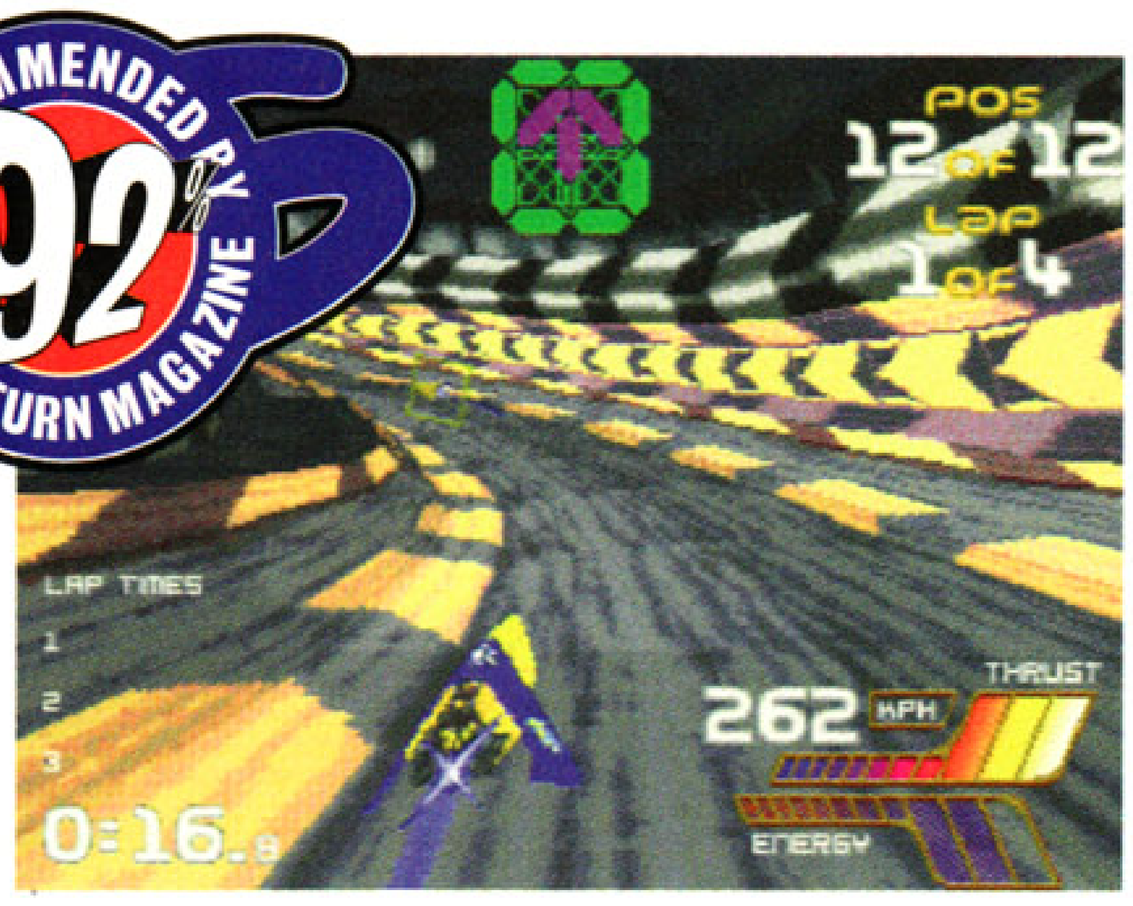
graphics	88
sound	73
playability	84
lastability	91
overall	87%

REVIEW

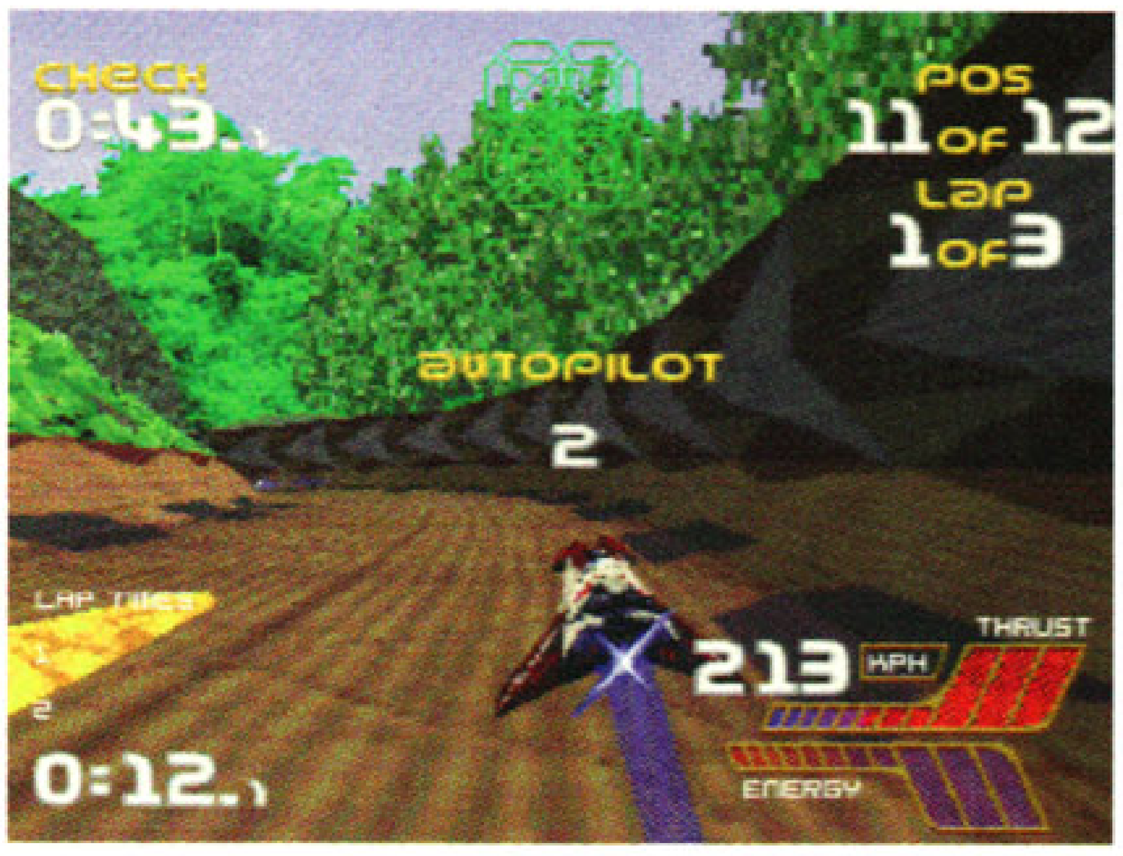
WIPEOUT 2097

Those PlayStation "exclusives" keep on falling into the clutches of us Saturn owners! WipEout 2097 hits the Saturn this month and Resident Evil isn't too far behind. Rejoice!

BY	PSYGNOSIS
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	RACING
RELEASE	JULY







The Autopilot gives a massive boost of speed when activated.





I have to admit for the record that I really thought that the Saturn rendition of the original WipEout was bordering on the tatty. I bought a PlayStation to play that game and I really, really thought it was ace. In fact, I still do. Unfortunately, the Saturn rendition had all the great music stripped away, the frame rate was really dodgy, the controls... different and the special effects gone. But even then it was an above average game. It was "good enough".

Well now we have the follow-up, WipEout 2097, freshly converted from PlayStation to Saturn in what the developers call a "straightforward port". Well, the original was just the same and I really didn't like it, so how does the sequel measure up? Very, very well is the answer!

Just as I loved PlayStation WipEout, so I also adored the sequel... and all of the above gripes I had with the Saturn translation have been ironed out almost totally on the new game. For starters, the speed and fluidity are nigh-on identical to the PlayStation version - the incredible feeling you got of speed is exactly the same and it makes for some truly exhilarating racing! Firing off a turbo power-

The speed and fluidity are nigh-on identical to the PlayStation version - the incredible feeling of speed and motion is exactly the same.

COOL NEW WEAPONS

WipEout's weaponry was definitely a bit hit-and-miss, mostly down to the fact that targeting your opponents was difficult. Well in WipEout 2097 lock-on systems are used for a great many of the weapons and those that aren't have a huge range that encompass more than one craft. The best weapon of all causes a huge wave to spread out in front of you, travelling along the road taking out anyone in front of you! Unlike old WipEout, you can actually die in 2097. You have an energy bar which is diminished through taking weapons fire and crashing into the sides of the track. So being careful is obviously the order of the day.





(Above) The Quake Disruptor in action!



No clipping problems in the year 2097!



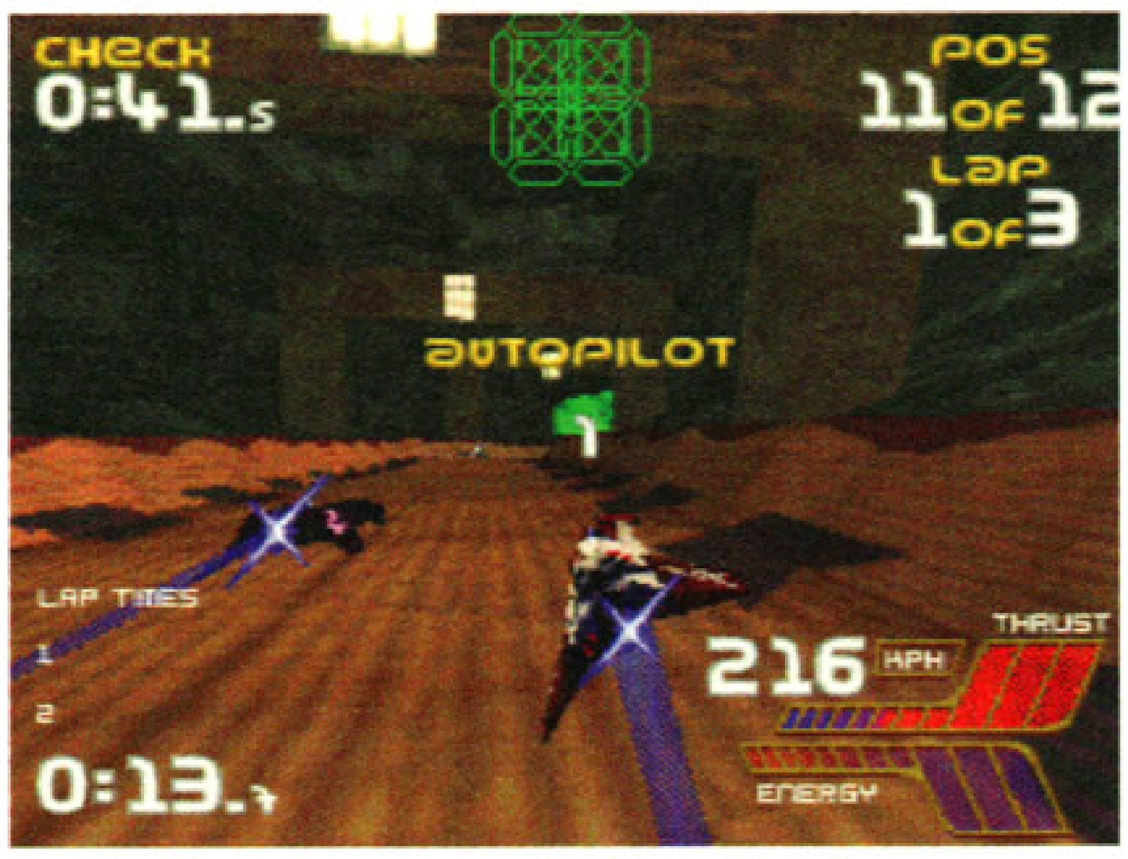








Cool lighting effects show the Saturn still has what it takes.



See? I told you there were no clipping problems!

The amount of detail is phenomenal - these are probably the most packed visuals seen in any Saturn road racer. The visual look is just brilliant.

up on the Phantom level courses is marvellous... the rush of speed perfect. This above all else is why I loved PlayStation WipEout and the Saturn version is exactly the same. Ace!

In just about every way, the game is a carbon copy of the PlayStation original. The courses are identical (bar a few changes in the lighting) but more importantly the control system is the same. The feeling of weight on each craft is excellent and controlling these hovering speedsters is just about perfect. WipEout was originally designed to mix the best of Super Mario Kart and F-Zero on Super NES and I believe that Psygnosis have realised this objective perfectly.

No-one is likely to have any complaint about the graphics. The courses are packed full of 3D scenery with the minimum of pop-up and although one course seems to have some slow-down (and it's not readily noticeable to be honest), the other five tracks whizz along with all the speed of the PlayStation version. The amount of detail is phenomenal - these are probably the most packed tracks seen in any Saturn road racer. The visual look is just brilliant.

The one disappointment is that once again we have no licensed music. I'm a big Prodigy and Chemical Brothers fan, so the omission of their music was a great shame in my opinion as it matched the action perfectly. The Cold Storage music you get is good, but I prefer the original WipEout tunes, but considering the overall quality of the conversion, perhaps this is just nit-picking.



So how does WipEout 2097 measure up compared to the wealth of quality racers already available on the Saturn? Again, very well indeed. Although Sega Rally Championship still rules the roost (and probably will do for many a month to come unless Touring Car really is incredible), I'd probably rate WipEout 2097 as being the second-best game of the genre you can get. And considering that this puts the game above the likes of Daytona (but not by much), Daytona CCE and Manx TT SuperBike this can only be a ringing endorsement of a very cool game.

RICH LEADBETTER



If energy is very low (above), be careful when overtaking...

TRANSPARENCY TANTRUMS

Whenever a PlayStation game arrives on Saturn, everyone seems to have what we like call the proverbial "stick up their arse" when it comes to the issue of transparency effects. The PlayStation version of WipEout 2097 had some ace effects on the shields and vapour trails, and once again the Saturn is left out with the usual meshing pixels effect. To be honest, the effect isn't half as poor as it was on the original WipEout and although the shields still look a bit suspect, the vapour trails and explosions aren't too bad.







Far superior to the previous WipEout conversion, 2097 manages to pack in all of the style and speed of the PlayStation original, looking and playing brilliantly!

graphics	94
sound	92
playability	94
lastability	90

overall

92%

SKY TARGET

If the 2D sprite-scaling shenanigans of Afterburner weren't enough to capture your interest, feast your eyes upon Sega's latest arcade conversion, dubbed the Afterburner for the nineties.

BY	SEGA
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	SHOOT 'EM UP
RELEASE	OUT NOW







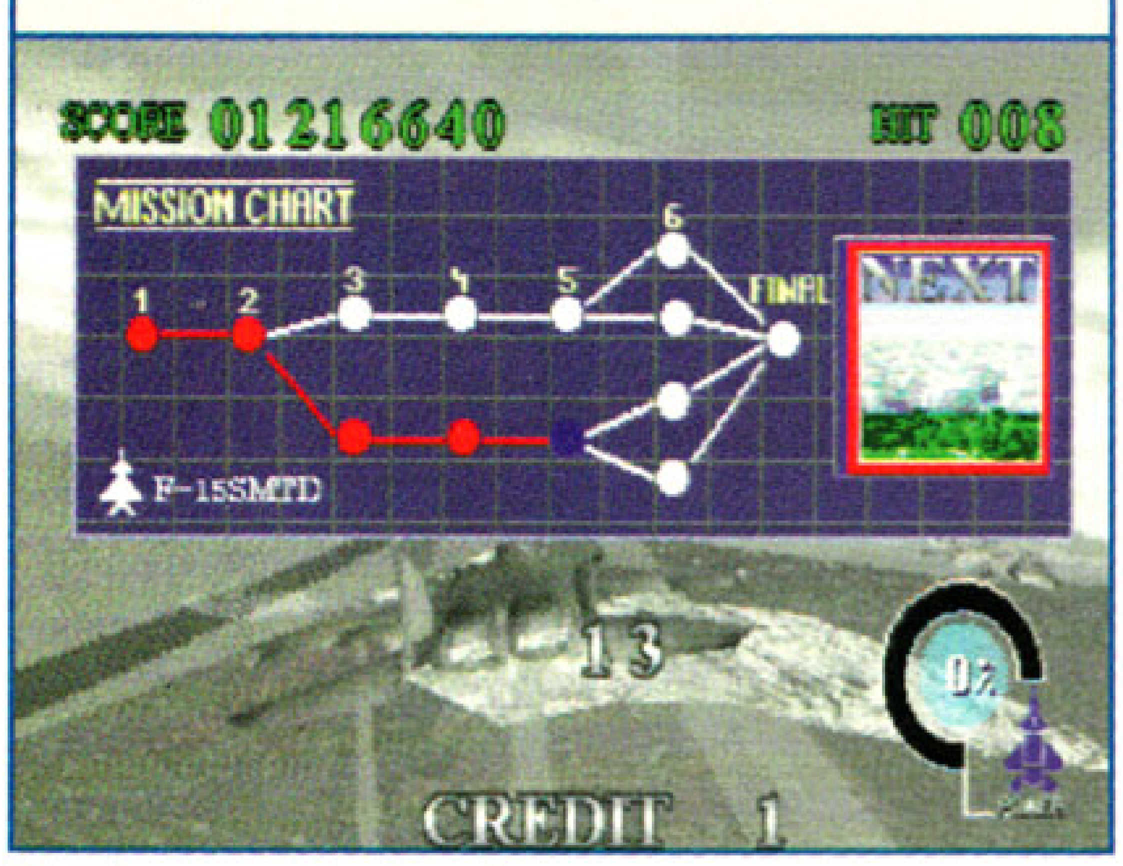
The gigantic bosses aren't that tricky, it's the tight time limit that causes problems.



Mid-air mission briefings.

DESTINATION UNKNOWN

Improving upon the original Afterburner formula, multiple routes have been incorporated into SkyTarget allowing players varying ways of completing the game. At several points throughout the game players are able to select their chosen course, encountering different endings and bosses along the way.



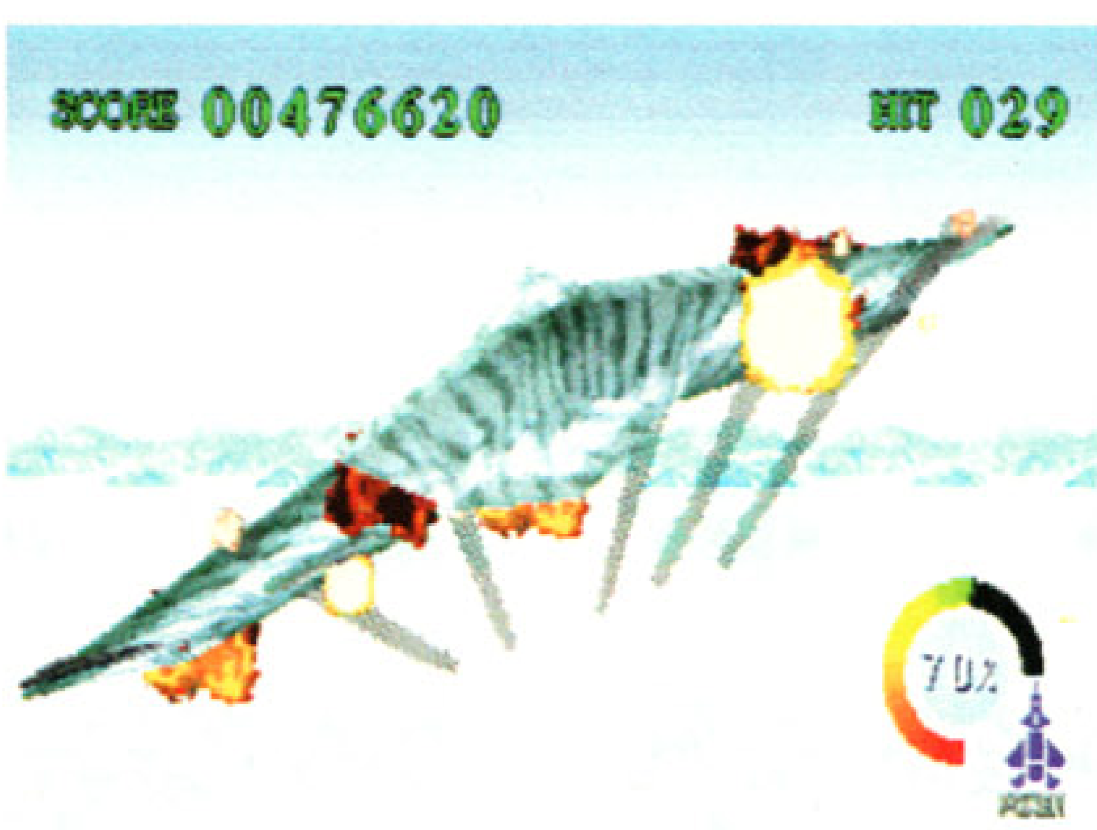
Multiple routes allow for different ways to finish the game.

All right, hands up all those who watched Top Gun and saw the huge amount of women swooning over Tom Cruise and thought, that's for me Yep, I admit it, I'm one of those sad, lonely, girlfriendless people. Now hands up all those who are actually elite fighter pilots putting their life on the line for King and country. Exactly. You see, that's the beauty of videogames. They allow people the opportunity to participate in activities they would never be able to in their everyday lives. Hence SkyTarget.

A top secret prototype fighter has been stolen by an unknown enemy force. Your mission is to fly into enemy airspace and locate and destroy said fighter, before returning home for scones and afternoon tea. In terms of gameplay, this basically means progress down a predetermined route through each of the dozen or so levels fending off the hordes of enemy fighter planes, destroyers, bombers and gun placements hell-bent on blasting you out of the sky. Destroying the enemy is carried out in similar fashion to the classic Afterburner, targeting enemies with the lock-on sight before letting rip with an array of deadly weapons. Awaiting players whom have successfully managed to reach the end of each level, is an end-of-level boss of gigantic proportions. Ranging from an awesome armoured airship to stray nuclear missiles, the bosses are most impressive indeed. Destroying them takes quite some doing, made more frantic by the strict time limit imposed on the proceedings. If the time runs out, the boss plane escapes, denying players of valuable points.

A range of fighter planes are available to the player identical to those seen in the arcade version. The F-14 Tomcat, the F-15, the F-16 stunt fighter and the French strategic fighter, Rafale M. Each are loaded with a lethal array of weaponry, ranging from the Vulcan Cannon to the Homing Missiles and more

Despite being a relative flop in the arcades, Sega have persisted in rolling out a Saturn conversion of their latest arcade shoot 'em up, SkyTarget.



As this stealth fighter demonstrates, the bosses are HUGE!



I feel the need... the need for speed. Not in this game, anyway.



The rocky canyon provides little cover from the enemy forces, with helicopters and gun placements abound.







Though not a terrible game by any means, SkyTarget is definitely one of Sega's weakest coin-ops to date.

SkyTarget does well to avoid the monotony of flight sims which adorn the PC, but could well benefit from the depth and involving gameplay of such titles.

powerful Balkan Bombs. Though each of the planes handle very well, the limited amount of control players are afforded over their planes is a real set-back. Gone are the missile-dodging barrel roll manoeuvres guaranteed to impress your mates and even the ability to alter the speed of your craft is sadly missing.

In the arcades at least, SkyTarget failed to achieve the same amount of success as its illustrious predecessor. Even with the awesome might of the Model 2 board behind it, SkyTarget never really impressed looking positively mediocre in comparison with the games around at the time. A criticism which could also be levelled at the Saturn version.

Graphically SkyTarget is pretty hit and miss. There's a good variety of levels with each looking quite different to the last and the brief glimpses of enemy fighters as they whiz by at breakneck speeds are fairly impressive too. However a great deal of the technical trickery that comes as standard with any Model 2 game has been difficult to replicate on the Saturn, with the game suffering from bad clipping in places, occasional glitching and some poor explosion effects. The in-game music is also of poor quality, with the standard soft-rock tunes occasionally interrupted by a deranged keyboard player on speed.

SkyTarget does well to avoid the monotony of flight sims which adorn the PC by sticking to arcade-like thrills. Such games require an encyclopaedic knowledge of the inner-workings of a multi-million pound fighter, every last key on the keyboard and a manual the size of a telephone directory. Yet SkyTarget could well benefit from some of the depth and involving gameplay of such games. The action is repetitive and inherently shallow, with little to entice players back for more. The staple of any Sega coin-op conversion, the Saturn specific features are curiously absent, albeit with the exception of a ranking mode.

As it stands, SkyTarget is a fairly decent conversion of the coin-op but at the same suffers from all the same flaws. The PAL conversion is also particularly poor, exhibiting large intrusive black borders, presumably to optimise the speed. Though it remains a fairly playable blaster, Panzer Dragoon Zwei is a game more worthy of your cash.

LEE NUTTER

AFTERBURNER: THE RETURN?

Not exactly. Whilst it is clear that the programmers drew their inspiration for SkyTarget from the classic blaster that ruled the arcades in the late eighties, it's not a proper sequel as such. But the similarities between the two games are overwhelming, with the action being viewed from the standard chase perspective of Afterburner, featuring the same F-14 Tomcat fighter plane, a similar lock-on targeting procedure and similar voice samples from the co-pilot. And one of the music tracks is directly lifted from the AM2 classic! Now what we'd really love to see, or at least I would anyway, is a proper Model 3 sequel to the classic Afterburner with near photo-realistic graphics. with more freedom of movement. Are you listening AM2? Probably not.





Loads of transparent effects, but they're just not very good.



If you don't like it, don't blame Sega 'cos they didn't convert it.

A good conversion of an average coin-op that lacks long term appeal and depth of gameplay. Not recommended.

graphics	82
sound	60
playability	76
lastability	71
overall	73%

REVIEW

DARKLIGHT CONFLICT

Electronic Arts have let us down pretty badly in recent months with tat games such as NBA Live '97, FIFA '97 and the very poor Battlestations. And now they're back with... a pretty cool game?

BY	Electronic Arts
PRICE	£44.99
STYLE	SPACE COMBAT
RELEASE	JULY

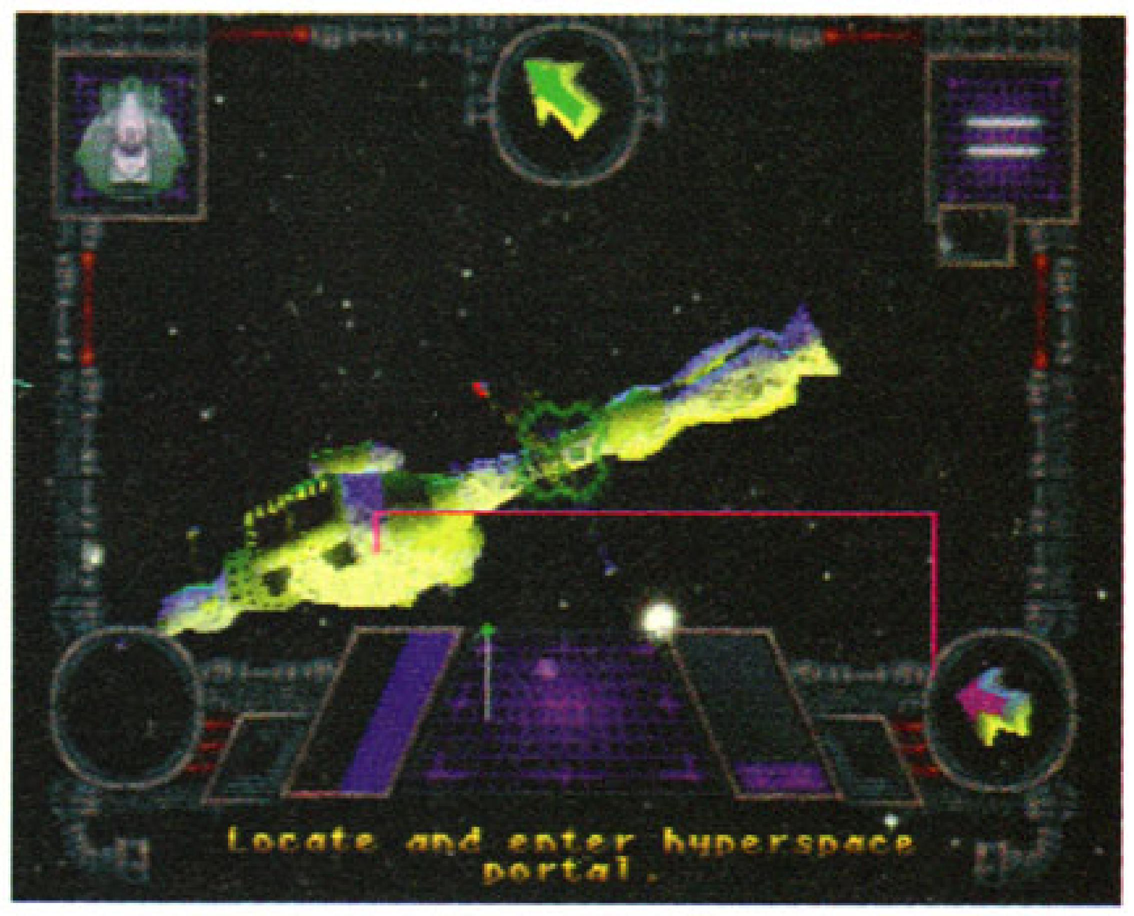
LET ME PLAY AMONGST THE STARS

Did I mention the training? Well, I think I'll mention it again anyway, as for the first few days you own this game you'll be struggling to finish the demanding alien preparation course. This isn't one of those trendy management training sessions, where you get in touch with your inner feelings, instead it's designed to turn you into a killing machine, giving you practise with a huge number of weapons!





DC's ships take their cue from many classic sci-fi sources.



Light-sourced 3D spaceships look cool from any angle.

You know that people quite often disappear for no reason, never to be seen again? What do you think happens to them? Did they jump off a bridge? Perhaps they faked their own death to start a new life under a secret identity? Or maybe, just maybe, they were abducted by the Repton military forces and genetically engineered to pilot cutting-edge alien fighters in a desperate attempt to overthrow the evil Ovon Empire?

The final, and perhaps least likely of those options, is the plot behind Darklight Conflict. Of course, to pilot a Repton attack vessel your arms will need to be replaced by 'reptilian tentacular structures' and obviously your legs are attached to the ship's solar drive, oh and you'll need a life-support system as well, but apart from that and a few other DNA modifications, the finest human fighter pilots are ready to do battle. Exactly why they agree to do battle after being abducted and genetically hacked to pieces by ruthless aliens isn't clear, but I suppose it's better to die as a mutant alien war hero than a pathetic whining human, so into battle they go.

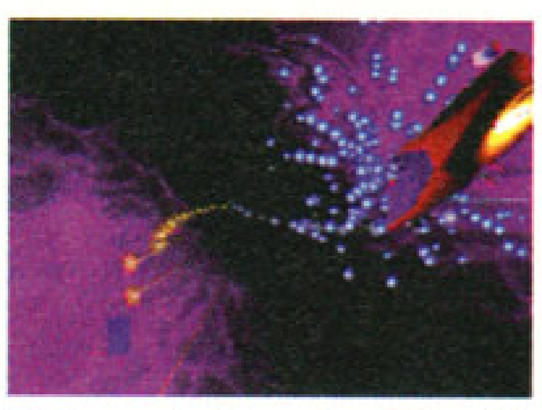
That's where the game starts. In order to get used to the ship controls and weapon systems (and reptilian tentacular structures I suppose) there's a large training mission to complete even before you start the game. Many hours alone must be spent practising your flying, landing, shooting and bombing skills, to prepare you for the real battles that lie ahead. That's where the game really starts!

Thanks to the rigorous training section and the well designed controls, it's easy to speed through the first few missions - destroying weedy ships that surely the Reptons could've managed on their own, but after a while things start to get tough. Very tough. Very, very tough would be a more accurate description, and I would need to use language not appropriate to this magazine to honestly explain the exceedingly tough nature of this game. No surprise the Reptons need

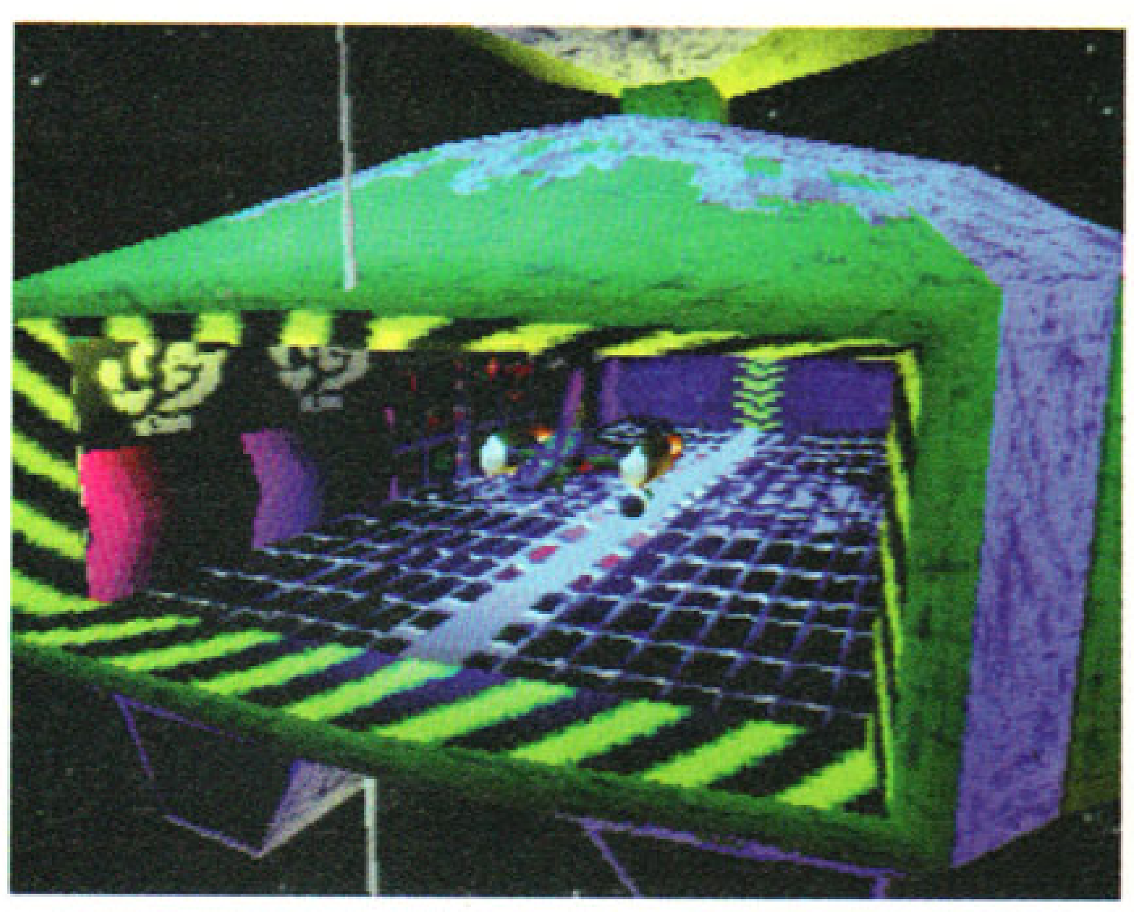
The Saturn is performing some impressive lighting effects - laser fire lights up enemy ships, asteroids and whatever gets in the way.



The large ships are impressive and well-detailed.



Welcome to the colourful and surreal world of Hyperspace.

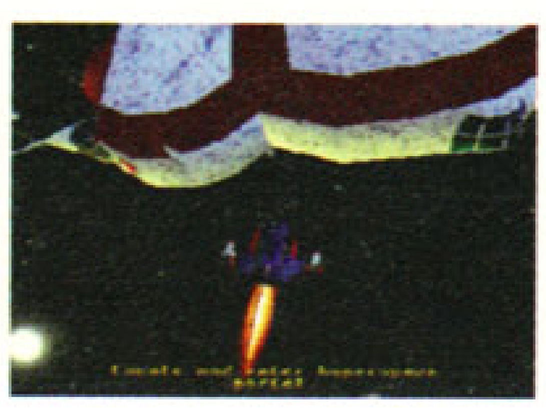


Mirror, signal, manoeuvre, engage anti-matter thrusters.



Space conflict is usually over quite quickly, so it's pretty difficult to get a decent look at the ships in motion. Shame, they look cool!







Players travel over vast distances via the convenient use of Hyperspace, make sure you go to the toilet before you leave!



A fine view of the cockpit above, showing the 3D radar, shield, target arrow, and a rather nasty alien spaceship.



An early training mission - Tractor Beam use.

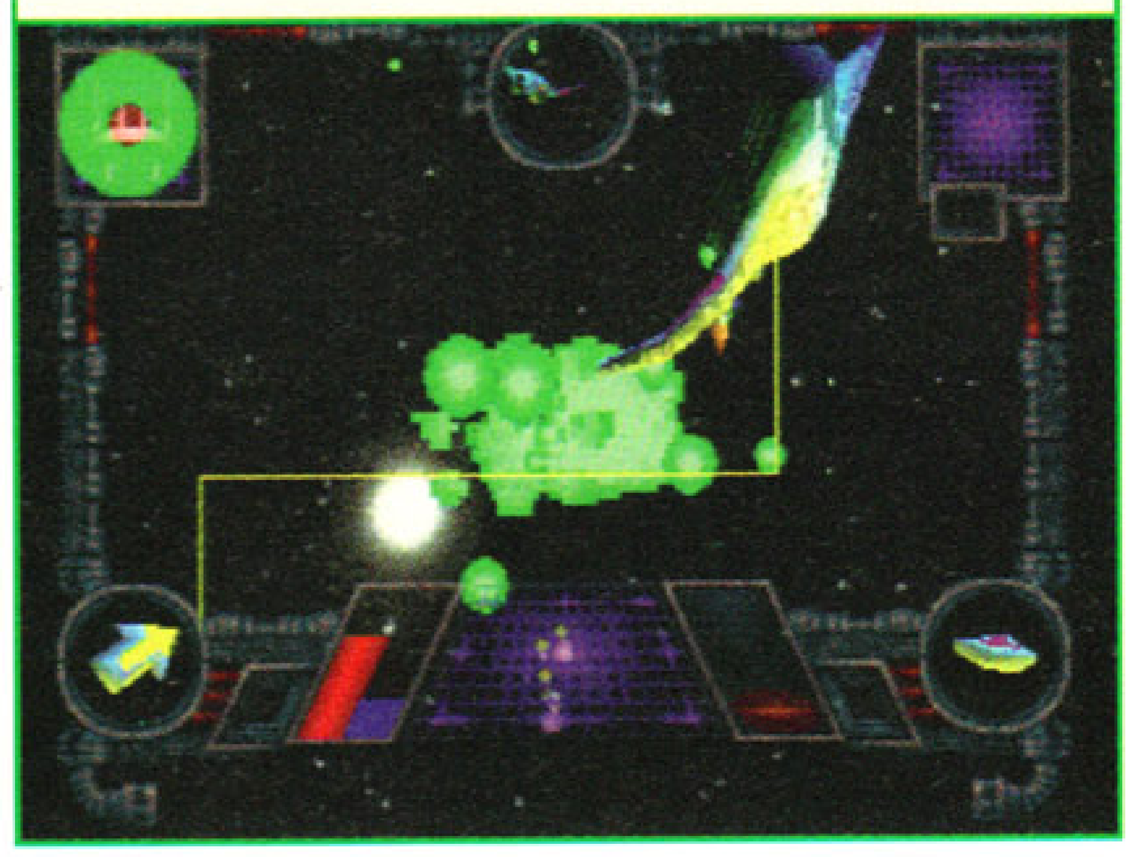






MANUAL ACTION

Surprisingly, for this type of game, the manual offers loads of great help. Most importantly, the section headlined 'How To Stop Dying All The Time' which gives some short but essential tips on, you've guessed it, how to stop dying all the time. Highlighting the difference between human and Repton, the sound select gives you the choice between Stereo and Mono "depending on how many ears you have."



Although some of the later missions are fairly long affairs, the action continues all the way through with some complex and well designed duties.

human help.

Most of the difficulty comes from the combat system. It's always been tough for 3D space games to make flying and fighting easy, and although Darklight does a good job, most of the dog-fights follow the same pattern. It's essential to use the view from within the cockpit - the chase camera views are pretty, but you don't get to see your scanners, and when engaged in battle you really need to know where the next enemy target is coming from. The ship also has a nice 3D radar display for tracking other ships, and some arrows assist in locating targets, but once you've worked out a good aerial combat technique, battles with enemy ships become a slightly annoying diversion.

Fortunately, the game structure gives you plenty of other missions with lots of variety, so it's not all dog-fighting - you're asked to man the gun stations, mine essential ore, destroy asteroids and defend large cruisers - but being in a war zone means constant attacks from enemy fighters as well, so you often have to put your mission on hold to dispatch a few bad guys. The game very nicely gives you a password when you make your way through a mission to stop things becoming repetitive, and although some of the later missions are fairly long affairs, the action continues all the way through with some complex and well designed duties, and should you fail in your mission it inevitably ends with news that your failure has lead to the complete and utter annihilation of the Repton race. Talk about pressure!

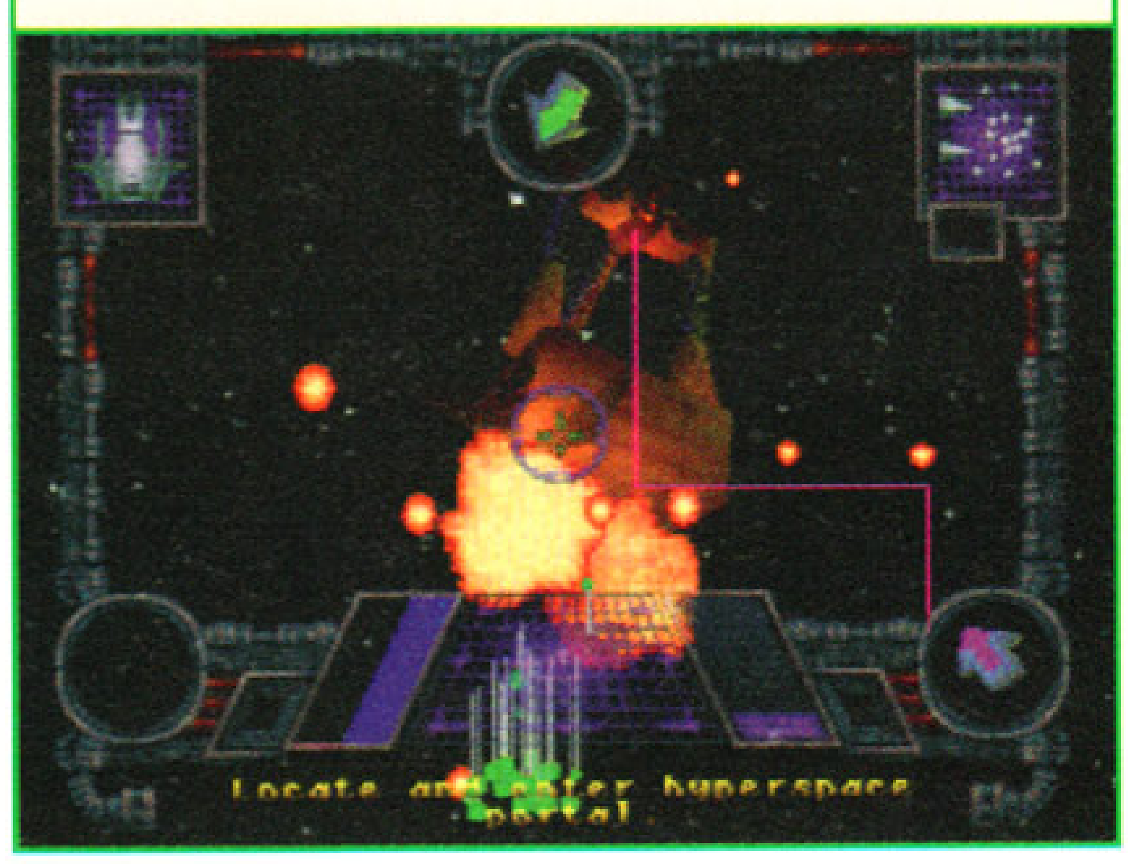
Visually, Darklight Conflict takes place in a very pretty universe. The Saturn is performing some impressive lighting effects - laser fire lights up enemy ships, asteroids and whatever gets in the way - and there are many decent looking ships, all of which are nicely designed and explode with a satisfyingly large amount of debris. The presentation is cool as well, all the options have groovy special effects and flashy logos, and although you have to use every button on the joypad to play the game, it's not bogged down with too much technical detail.

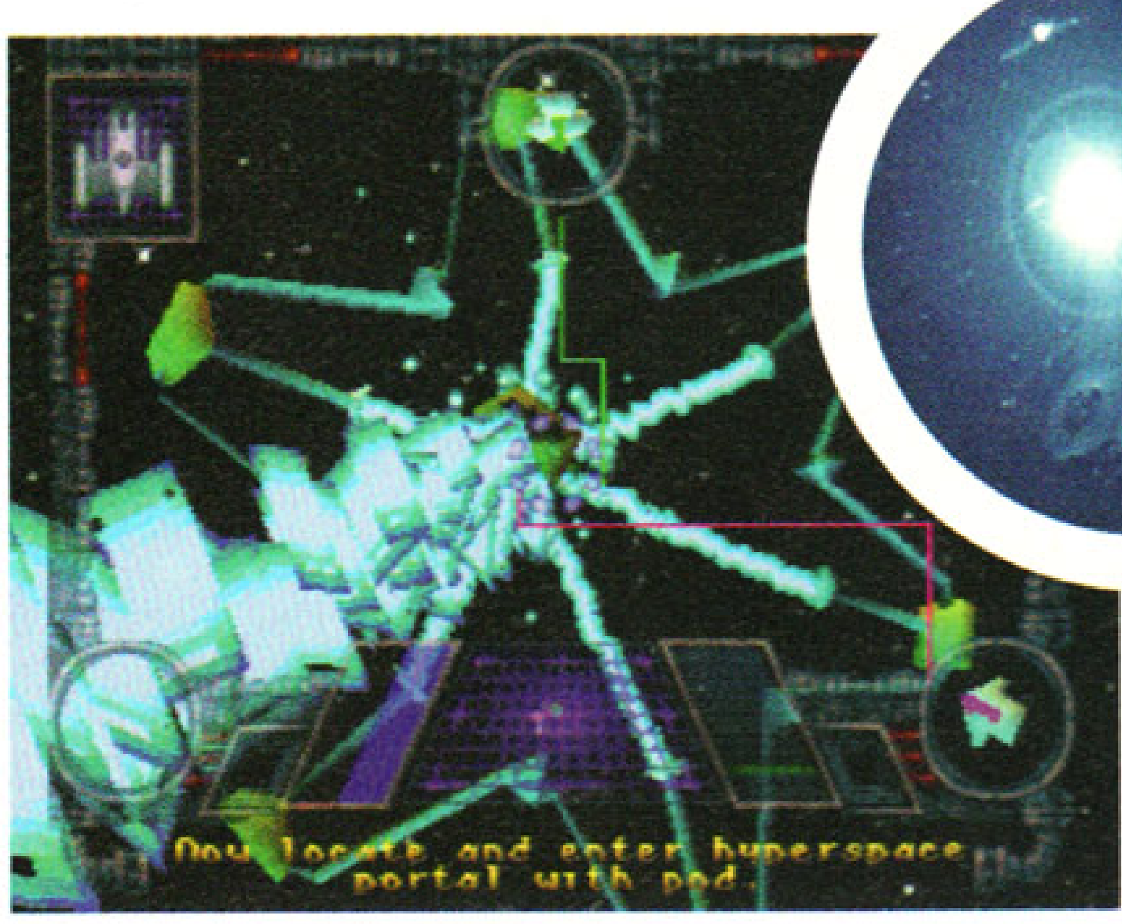
But enough of this idle banter. What you want to know is "is this game worth £44.99?" Well... it's a vicious world out there, but Darklight Conflict could well appeal to a fair few Saturn owners who are searching for something a bit more involving and long lasting than the average arcade conversion, with a varied assortment of missions, and even (gasp) some thinking required. But not too often... that would be silly.

GARY CUTLACK

GREASED LIGHTNING

You'll be needing some weapons then. Obviously we're talking alien technology here, so there's none of those 'guns' and old fashioned bombs that you Earthlings use - we're talking full-on destruction with weapons such as Fragmentation Cannons, Drive Seeking Missiles, Screamers, Judgement Cubes and the not-very- frighteningly-named Rector Bomb. Of course you have access to Cloaking facilities and Tractor Beams as well, and there is a hushed mention of an unknown device known only as the Darklight Drive. So... there's plenty of secret stuff to play for too.









Some excellent graphics and well polished gameplay make Darklight Conflict a recommended release and a great return to form for Electronic Arts.

graphics	82
sound	80
playability	85
lastability	87
overall	86%

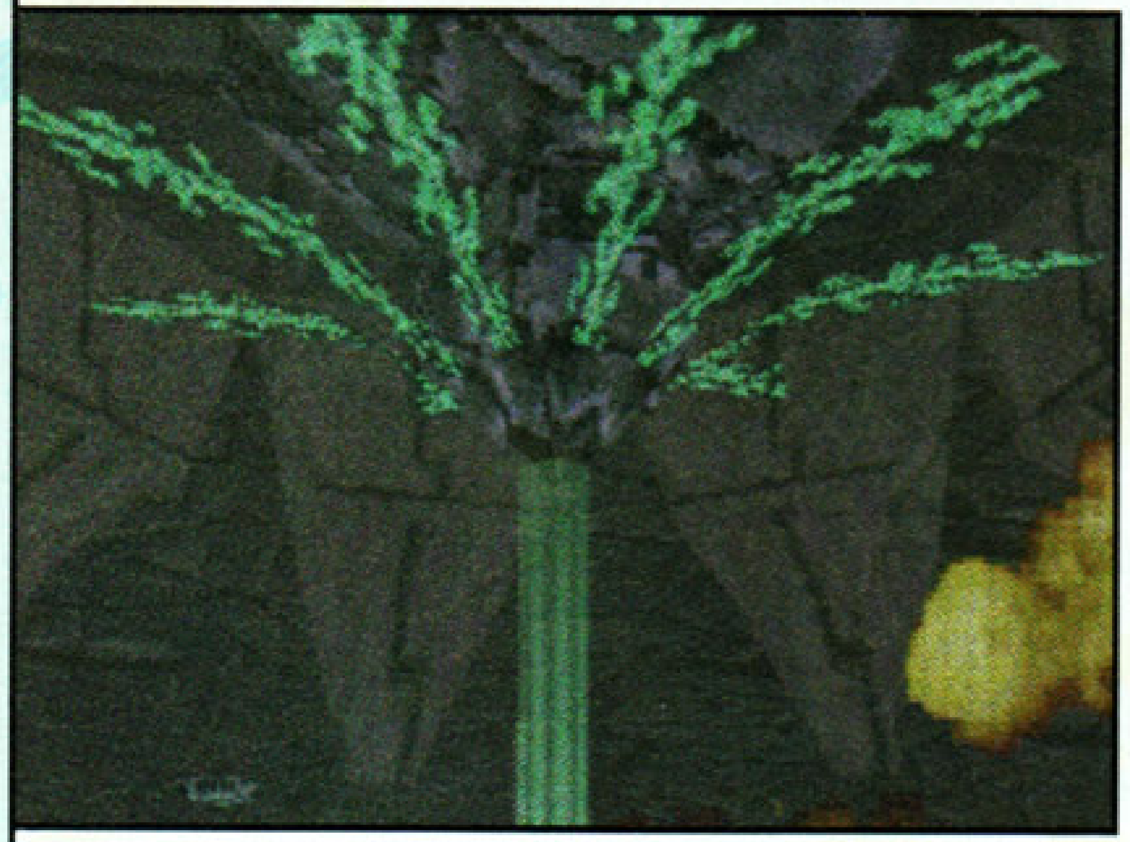
SEGA SATURN™ tips

While our esteemed editor has been sunning himself over in the good ol' US of A, those tips have been rolling in! As well as part two of our exclusive Shining the Holy Ark guide (courtesy of the Master himself) and the final levels of Hexen laid to rest, be sure to check out the Fighters MegaMix page for a couple of nifty secret characters. Oh, and make sure you keep those cheats and tips rolling in by sending them to: Sega Saturn Saturn Tips Section, 37-39 Mill Harbour, Isle of Dogs, London E14 9TZ

INDEPENDENCE DAY

A poor conversion of last year's smash hit sci-fi movie but still a reasonable Saturn shoot 'em up. Here's a load of useful cheats to make Fox Interactive's alien blaster just a little bit more user friendly.

ENABLE ALL CHEATS
To unlock all the game's hidden codes at once, go to the options menu and enter your name as **"RADARMY."** Exit to the game select screen and quickly press **Left, Right, Up, Down, X, Z, Y.** A cheat menu will appear, allowing players to choose all the secret options.





FAST RELOAD, DAMAGE BONUS, UNLIMITED WEAPONS
Go to the options mode and enter the player name as **"GO POSTAL."** Exit to the game select screen and quickly enter **Left, Right, Up, Down, X, Z, Y.** You will go to a cheat menu, and now have the option to switch the Fast Reload, Damage Bonus and Weapons modes on. Fast Reload lets you fire missiles rapidly, Damage Bonus takes out aliens, generators and vehicles in one shot. Weapons gives you unlimited firepower.

SELECT CITY
Select the options mode and enter the player name as **"FOX ROX."** Exit to the game select screen and quickly enter **Left, Right, Up, Down, X, Z, Y.** This takes you to a cheat menu, and from here you may proceed to any city in the game.

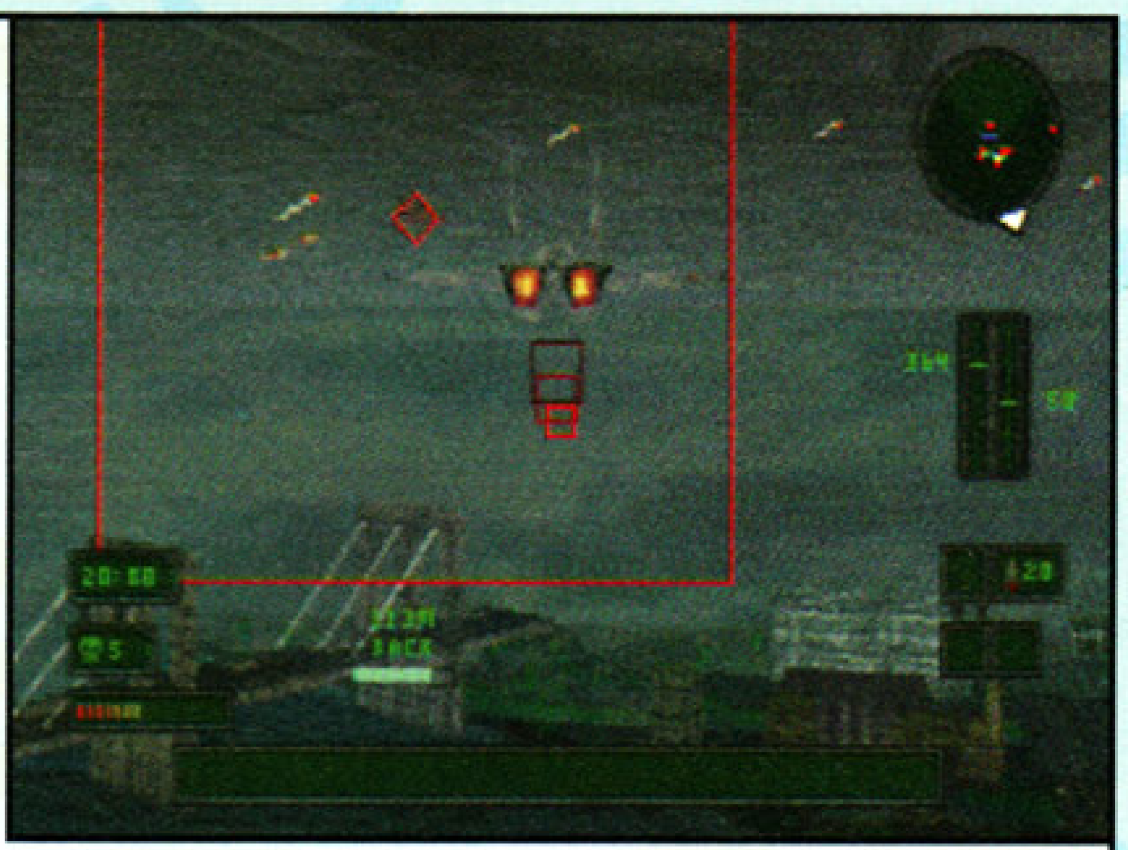


SELECT PLANE
Go to the options mode and enter the player name as **"MR HAPPY."** Exit to the game select screen and quickly enter **Left, Right, Up, Down, X, Z, Y.** A cheat menu appears allowing instant access to any plane including the alien fighter craft.

TARGET CIVILIANS AND FRIENDLIES
On the options mode, enter the player name **"GODZILLA."** Exit to the game select screen and quickly enter **Left, Right, Up, Down, X, Z, Y.** The cheat menu appears, and you'll now be able to switch the **KILL CIV** and **KILL WING** modes on, which will let you target civilian ground targets and even your wingman.







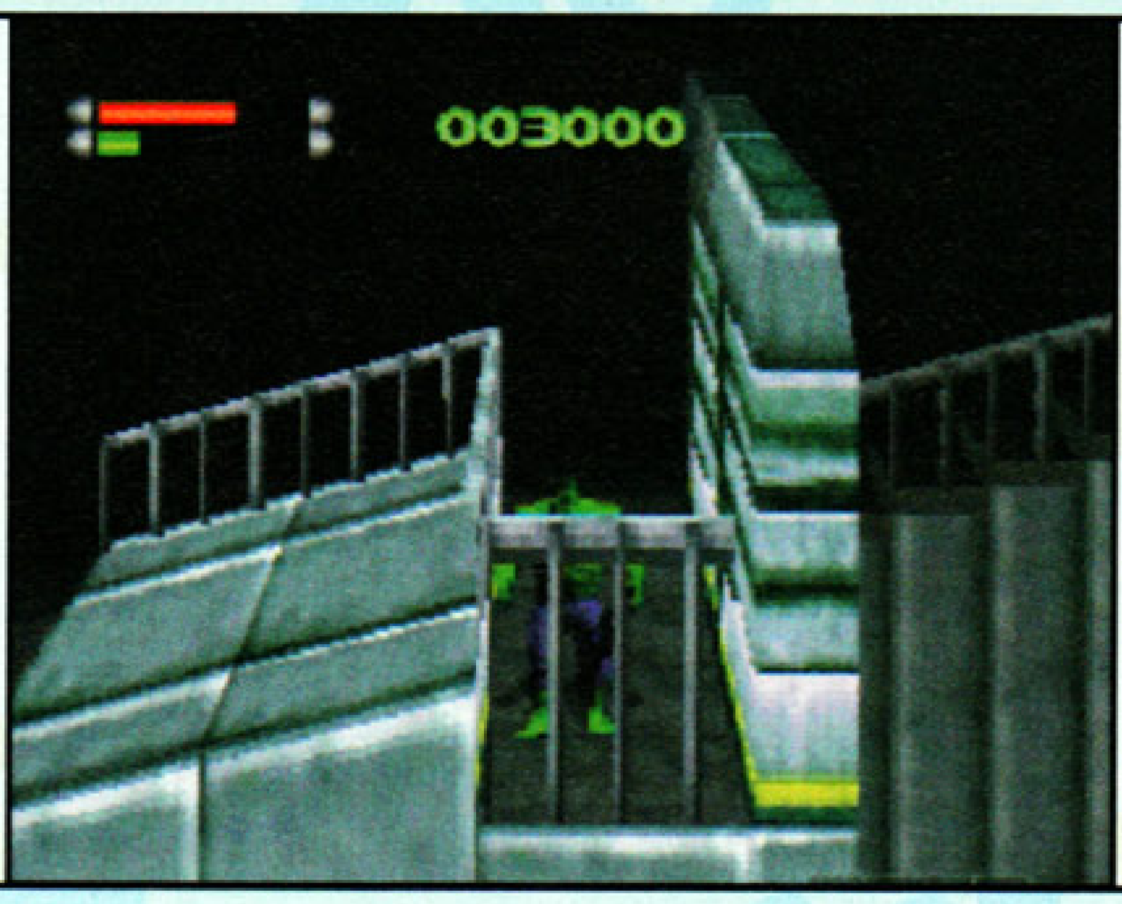


TOURIST MODE
Go to the options mode and enter the player name as **"TOURIST."** Exit to the game select screen and quickly enter **Left, Right, Up, Down, X, Z, Y.** On the cheat menu screen, switch the City, Tourist, Demo Cam, and No Time modes on. Tourist mode removes all aliens from the world, Demo Cam controls the camera with the joypad and No Time removes the time limit.

INCREDIBLE HULK

LEVEL PASSWORDS
This may not be the greatest Saturn game in existence (now that's an understatement) but someone out there is bound to be stuck on it. So here are some handy passwords for that lonely individual.

Level 2: 603EE0C530
Level 3: B08E0F0802
Level 4: 000026B698
Level 5: 40074DFF12





DRAGON FORCE

VARIOUS TIPS

NEW CHARACTER

Okay, so this awesome strategy/RPG has only just arrived but here's a useful hint which may influence the outcome of battles. There is a new character named Vangal to be found when playing Gongos. This dragon man hides in different locations in Legendra depending on the main character you have chosen. Here are the locations to find Vangal when selecting a certain leader:

Wein: Two villages west of Galfiel.
Teiris: Two villages west of Galfiel.
Leon: Village east to Fiend Tower.
Gongos: Village east to Fiend Tower (as detected by Jean-Michel).
Reinhard: Village north to Estonia Mikhal: First town south of the Castle Danyan.

ZOMBIE TIP

If you have thing about fighting Zombies then send some of your intelligent fighters to the towns of Magicka or Stalwart. Here you will find more than enough Spirit Crests.

EASY WAY TO CONQUER CASTLES

Deploy some of your armies to villages which are located near an enemy castle. If two enemy troops battle to conquer/defend this castle, just wait until the struggle has ended. Now deploy your army to the castle immediately. Normally the armies inside the castle have no time left to reinforce their men which makes it easy for you to conquer the fortress.







Explore the island of Legendra and battle the forces of darkness. Dragon Force is the latest cool Saturn RPG.



As well as the specific tips to the left, selecting the correct strategy during battle is the key to winning every time.



NORSE BY NORSEWEST

LEVEL CODES

If you're stuck on Interplay's Nordic puzzler, then help is at hand with the complete level code guide. These codes should make your pillaging progress a lot easier.

Level 2 - 1STS
Level 3 - 2NDS
Level 4 - TRSH
Level 5 - SW1M
Level 6 - WOLF
Level 7 - B4RT
Level 8 - K4RN
Level 9 - BOMB
Level 10 - WZRD
Level 11 - BLKS
Level 12 - TLPT
Level 13 - GSYR
Level 14 - B3SV
Level 15 - R3TO
Level 16 - DRNK
Level 17 - YOVR
Level 18 - OV4L
Level 19 - T1N3
Level 20 - D4RK
Level 21 - H4RD
Level 22 - HRDR
Level 24 - OBOY
Level 25 - HOM3
Level 26 - SHCK
Level 27 - TNNL
Level 28 - H3LL
Level 29 - 4RGH
Level 30 - B4RD
Level 31 - D4DY







ULTIMATE MK 3

DEAD BODIES TRICK

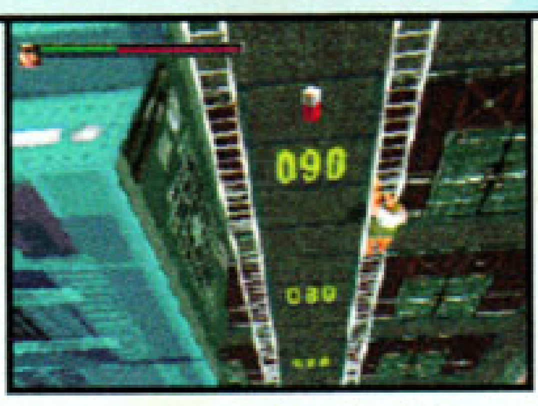
By selecting the pit bottom stage, you can make the dead bodies come to life or disappear. First, **press pause** whilst playing the game, then **press A, B, A, Z, Right, Up, then L + R.** When you press start again, the bodies will get up and will start to walk around or vanish completely. Spooky...



DIE HARD ARCADE

HARDER GAME

Finding Sega's awesome Die Hard Arcade too easy? Well try this out for size. Move the cursor to Die Hard, **hold X, Y, Z, B and press Start.** You'll now have four credits and brutal enemies to conquer.





So you thought Die Hard Arcade was too easy huh? Well try this code out and see if you can beat the game now, sucker.



This guy is just asking for a damn good thrashing.

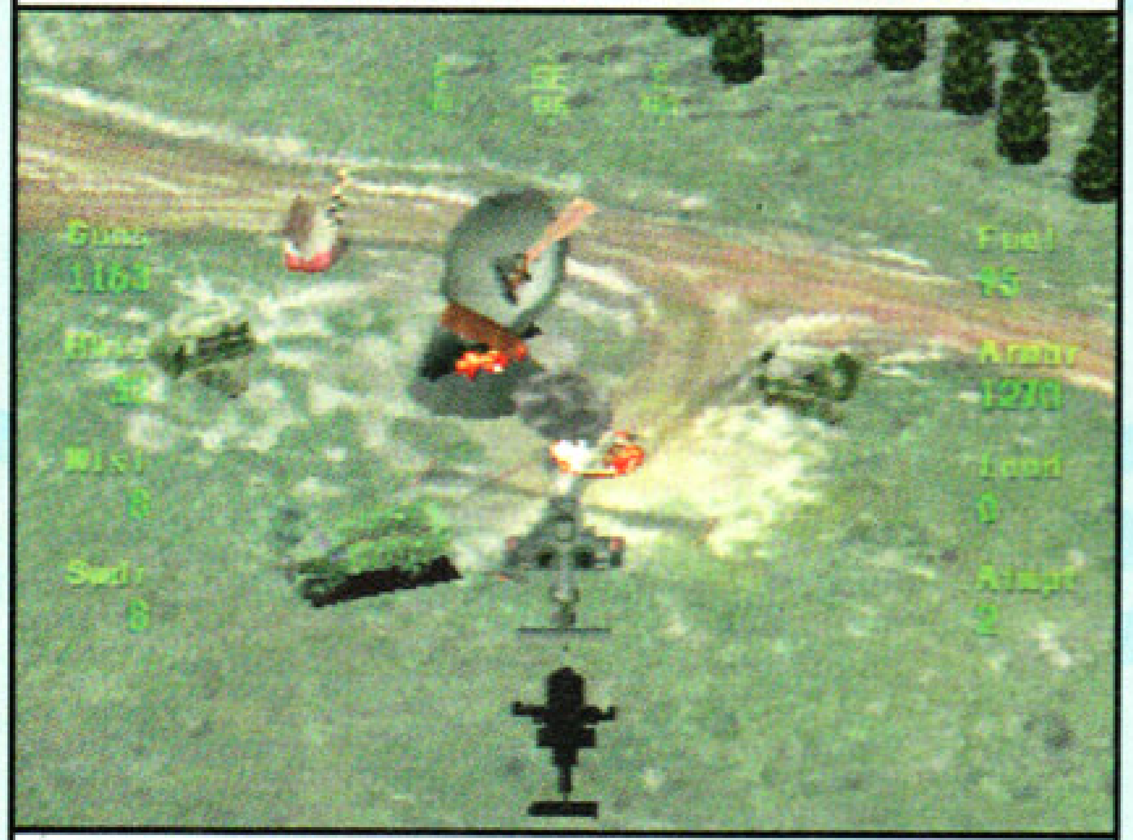
He may be old and bald but he's the boss.

SOVIET STRIKE

CHEAT CODES

We printed a few level codes for Electronic Arts' awesome isometric shoot 'em up a few issues ago and this month we've managed to get hold of these crazy codes.

COLDPIZZA - Unlimited Fuel
FREEBIE - One Extra Life
VOODOO - Four Extra Lives
GABRIEL - 4 x Weapon Power-Ups
ALBATROSS - 1/2 Speed Fuel Usage





MECHWARRIOR 2

ULTIMATE CHEAT CODES

To make Activision's stunning Mech shoot 'em up even better, enter the following codes on the password screen:

EXTRA HEAT SINKS: **#XXO/A4>Y+**
JUMP JETS: **#YXO/A>YOL**
CRUISE THROTTLE: **#AXO/A4YYA**
UNLOCK MISSIONS: **T<XO/AXA<=**
OVERWEIGHT MECHS: **#OXO/A>>O/**
EXTRA VARIANCE: **T#XO/<AX<<**
MORE AMMO: **TOXO/AX>TU**
INVINCIBILITY: **##XO/A><UZ**
NEW "ELEMENTAL" CHASSIS: **T/XO/AZ<#***
NEW "TARANTULA" CHASSIS: **#/XO/A4<LY**





These codes will give you more endless hours of 'bot-bashing. Enter the codes on the options screen to activate them.

NHL POWERPLAY HOCKEY

RAD ARMY TEAM

Tired of the same old boring teams?. Well try this little number out and the game's development team will kick some butt on the ice. Between the Team Select screen and the Jumbotron screen, press **A+Y+C.** You should then have the option to choose the Rad Army.





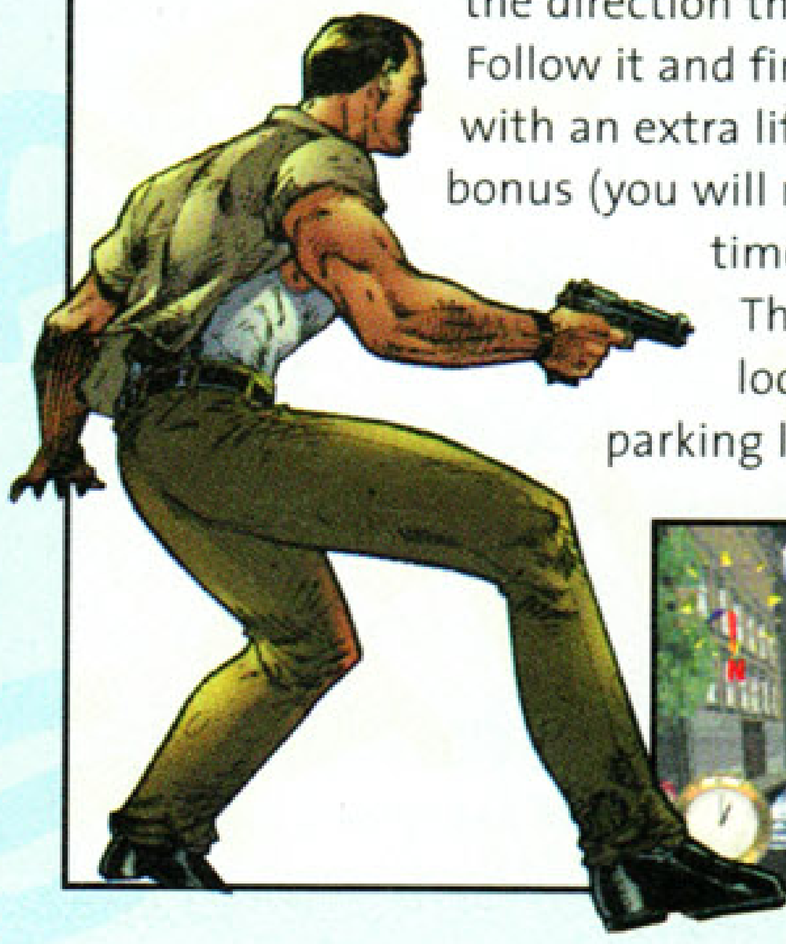


If you want the ultimate team, try this awesome cheat!

DIE HARD TRILOGY

DRIVE THE BABY PRAM

It may sound wacky but you can actually drive a Baby Pram in Die Hard Trilogy! To do so, make it 68% of the way through the "Die Hard With A Vengeance" level that features the "Rain" effects. As soon as you're able to drive, turn around (do a 180) and a cop car should go speeding by. Follow it. You will lose sight of him after he makes a left turn but your indicator will show a blue arrow in the direction the cop went. Follow it and find a parking lot with an extra life and a time bonus (you will need it by the time you get here). The Baby Pram is located in the parking lot. Go for it, kid!













Q&A TIPS CENTRE

SHINING WISDOM

HELP, I'M STUCK!
Over the last couple of weeks SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE has been undated with calls from people who are stuck on this classic but challenging RPG. In order to prepare you for Shining the Holy Ark, and to aid these poor lost souls in their hour of need, we've compiled a selection of all-important Shining Wisdom information and advice to help brave adventurers on their quest.

Q1: I've just started the game and I'm wandering about with no idea what to do. So what do I do?
A1: Strange as it may sound, simply go to bed. From the left entrance of the castle, start travelling up the screen until you're as far back as you can go. Then simply go up the stairs, jump in the bed and take a nap.

Q2: I'm in Gudo Valley. I've got the slide shoes but don't know what to do with them.
A2: You want to head to the Mystic Woods situated in the North-West part of East Odegan. The slide shoes will enable you to get under hollow tree trunks and thus explore the Mystic Woods further.



Q3: Where are the Magic Hands?
A3: During your exploration of the Mystic Woods, you should come across a tree trunk that leads down South off of the screen. It's situated in the lower left part of the woods. It actually leads to a watery area where there are some very strange monsters. Remember the Library from the Castle? Well, using the stone shoes will make the monsters flip. Then you can kick them around a bit. Also, when you get to the two monsters in a row, kick them up.

Q4: I talk to the trees, but they don't listen to me!
A4: Hmm... what you need is either some mental advice or the Whisper Conch. You'll find it in the Gudo Valley and once you get the Magic Hands, you can complete the rest of this part of the game.Find the Fairy in Gudo Valley and she'll pass on the Whisper Conch. Equip it, and you're free to natter away.

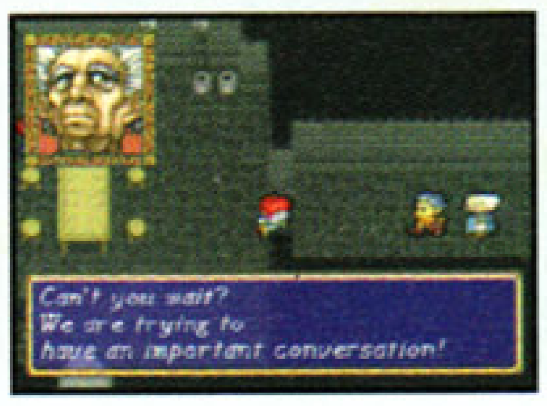
Q5: Where is the Princess?
A5: The Princess (swan) is located in the Mystic Woods. You need to use the Whisper Conch to talk to one of the trees. It will then open a blocked passage to the North part of the woods letting you get to the boss and the Princess.

Q6: How do I get into the Sand Labyrinth? There are two bombs in the way.
A6: What you want are the Hercules Gloves. After getting the Long Sword from the king, you need to go to his treasure room. Then go back to the bottom floor of the Castle, and follow the carpet until you get to the staircase. You'll find the treasure room below.

Q7: How do I get to the treasure chest in the Sand Labyrinth that is surrounded by walls?
A7: Get to the floor above the treasure chest. Make sure that the switch that changes the sand to ice is selected to sand. On the floor above you'll see a part in the sand that will breakaway (right above where the treasure chest is on the floor below). Walk into the center of the breakaway part and wait to fall. When you do, you will end up right in front of the chest. Now you have the Mole Claw.

Q8: How do I beat the Sand Labyrinth?
A8: We get asked about this all the time. On the bottom floor of the labyrinth you'll reach a door with a face on it that won't open. The answer is on the top floor. You need to change the sand to ice when you get there. Go to the left room on the top floor and change the sand to ice with the Magic Hands. Go up one room, and one room to the right and pick up an ice statue there using the Hercules Gloves. Now, without changing the ice back to sand, get back to the bottom floor of the dungeon (you can put down the statue). Take the statue to the door with the face on it, and the door will open. Then do the boss and you're sorted!

Q9: After beating the Sand Labyrinth, the King tells me that I can go wherever I want. Is this true?





A9: Yes and no. While you can go everywhere, you can't really do much unless you do things in the correct order. Try the Ice Labyrinth next. It's located in West Odegan. In the process, you'll need to slide into a teleporter using the Slide Boots and the Shock Orb.

Q10: I've beaten the Sand and the Ice Labyrinth. So what do I do next?
A10: Your next goal is to beat the Jump Labyrinth. It's located in the North part of East Odegan. And there is a sign out front that tells you that it's dangerous.

Q11: Okay, I'm in the Jump Labyrinth but how do I beat it?
A11: First of all, every single one of these hints are in both the Magic Guild and the Library. But now for the answers. The most important things to remember are that you can freeze the bombs with the Ice Orb (and the Stone Shoes). Freeze a bomb, and then take it to the face nearby. Wait for it to thaw, and then throw it. Also, when you get to the room with all of the sand in it, remember to dig everywhere, and try to go all directions in the sand. There is a roundabout way through the wall to get to the items. And finally, use the Magic Hands and the Shock Orb to throw spark balls into the moving blue rings by the water.

Q12: How do I beat the boss of the Fire Labyrinth?
A12: To put it simply, you need to freeze his flame shots with the Ice Orb and the Stone Shoes. Then pick up the frozen shots with the Hercules Gloves and throw them at him. It only takes two hits to beat him.





Q13: I can't get through the Wind Labyrinth because I can't get across the gaps.
A13: What you need is the Pegasus Helm which involves going to the Mirror Labyrinth.

Q14: And how do I get through the Mirror Labyrinth?
A14: There are a few things to note to beat the Mirror Labyrinth. First of all there is a room just to the right from the position you start in, where you can use the Magic Mirror. By doing so, you change the view of the dungeon around (left now goes right). It also changes the closed mouths to open, bomb spewing mouths (and vice-versa). And the closed eyes change to open eyes that you can bomb (and vice-versa). Just keep going back and forth between the two sides to finish the dungeon.

Q15: I'm having problems in the Light Labyrinth – the place where you get the Shining Sword – so what should I do?
A15: There are two tough parts in the Light Labyrinth. One is the door that has three buttons in front of it. You can't push all of them at once, but the Magic Hands and the Blast Orb can. The other tip we can give you is that the sand doors can be blown down (or nuked down) with the Blast Orb and the Stone Shoes.



Shining the Holy Ark

PART 2



Welcome to part two of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE's definitive guide to Team Sonic's cosmic RPG Shining the Holy Ark. Last month we left you outside the forboding Aborigine Mansion! This month we conquer that area, plus the three sacred shrines, each less devious than the last (no joke). RICH LEADBETTER has done all of this hard work...

ABORIGINE FOREST AND MANSION

The forest is split into two essentially. Travel west to get to the mansion, or north to go to the graveyard catacombs. I recommend exploring the entire forest, picking up the sword and armour in the graveyard before returning south and heading for the mansion. Those two items add hugely to your attack capabilities.

The mansion itself is fairly simple. There are unlocked doors, locked ones and ones you need to charge into (by double-tapping forward) - they're all marked on the map. Because of the locked doors, the game essentially herds you in one direction, so it's inevitable you'll find the holy water and the key you need to open all the doors. Use the holy water in the poltergeist room, use the book you get in the library, find the clock key and use it in the place mentioned on the map. It's all very simple. The Dragon Warrior, Basso, joins the party here. He's a great physical batter, if a little short in the speed deparment.

There are a couple of puzzles involving the pushing of furniture to open secret passages. Again, all solutions are on the maps.

Once the clock has started you face the knight boss. He's easy-peasy to beat. Once he's dead, pull the lever behind him. This opens up the graveyard catacombs. Leave the mansion, go north through the forest and conquer the catacombs. Again, no problems.

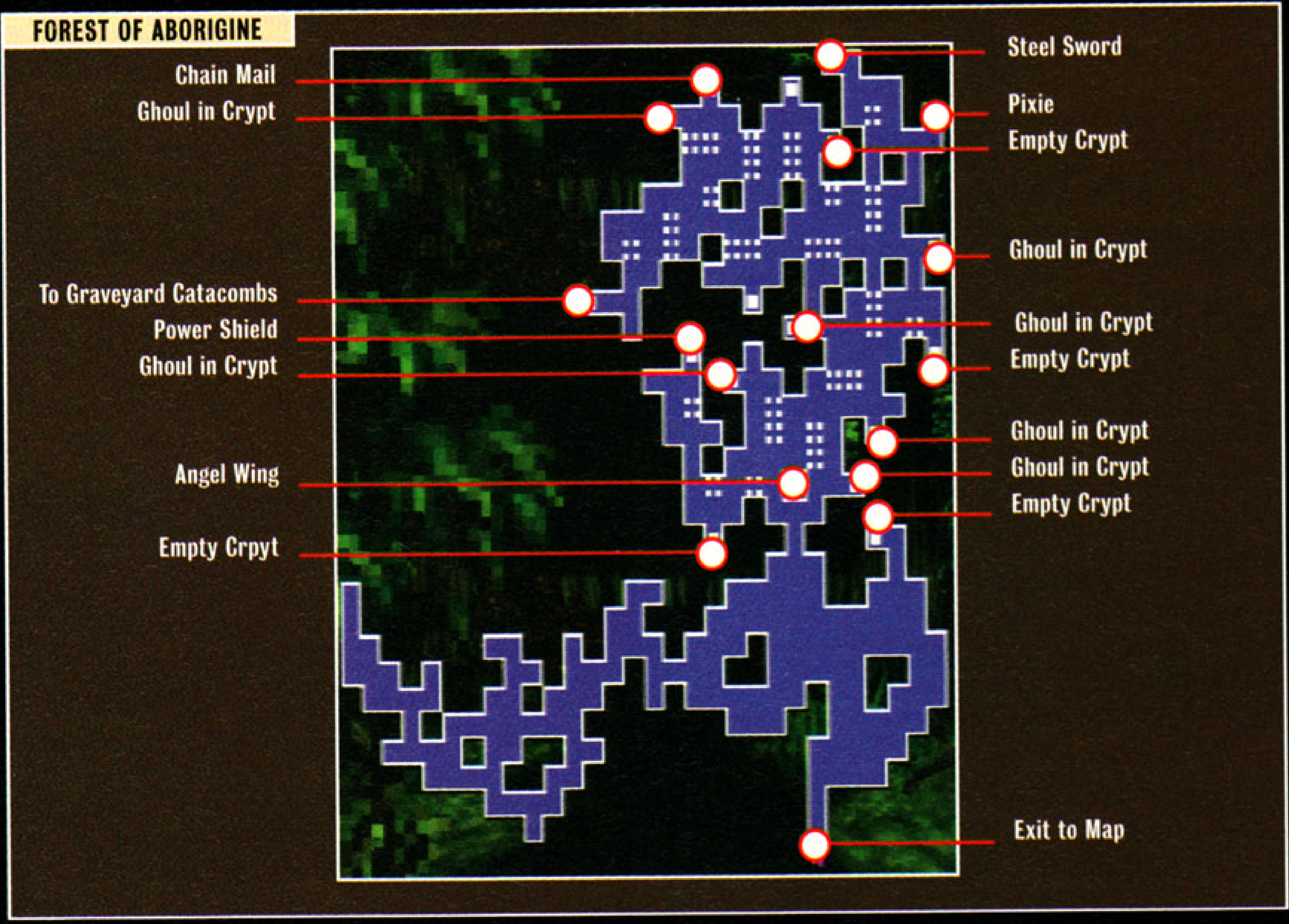
You face the vandal, Galm, who gives you an object you need (a gravity stone) in order to conquer the South Shrine, through the Mountain Cave.





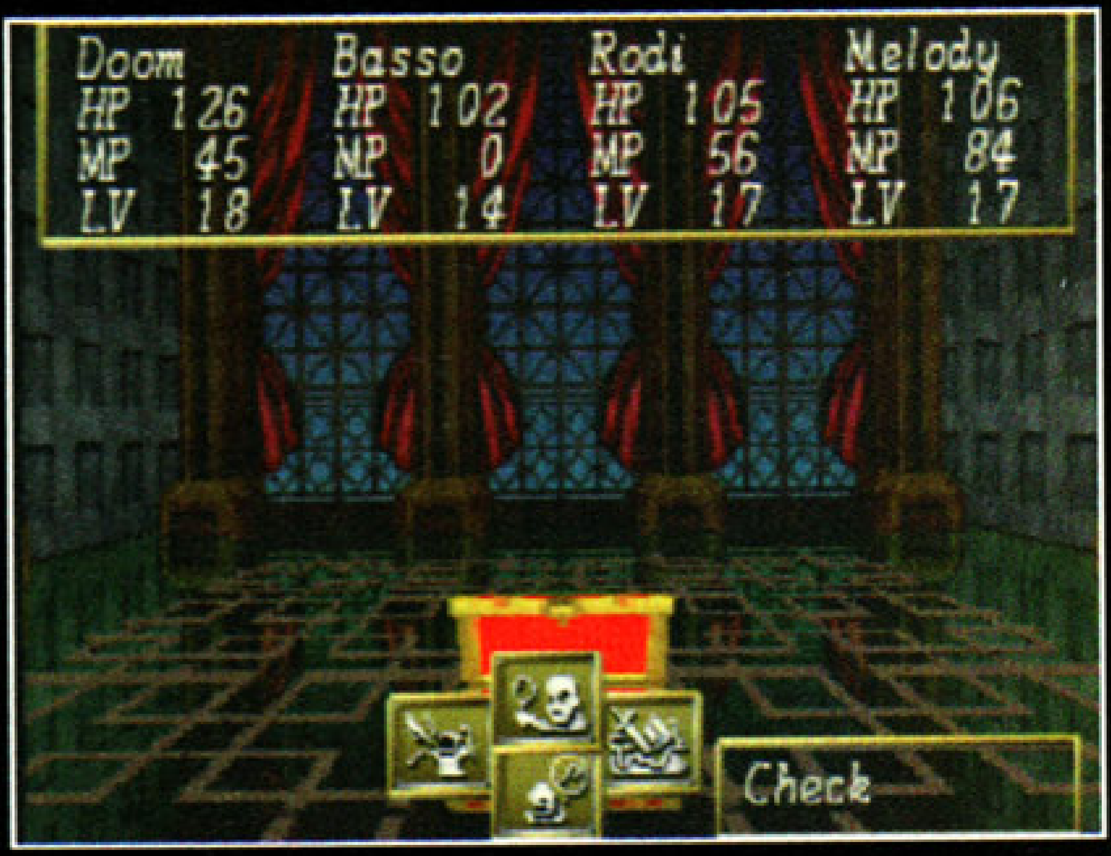


The Clock Tower is the key to the Mansion level... everything comes down to this part, where you do battle with a guardian in order to reveal this lever!





In the dungeons, you can expect to meet up with meanies just like these two!

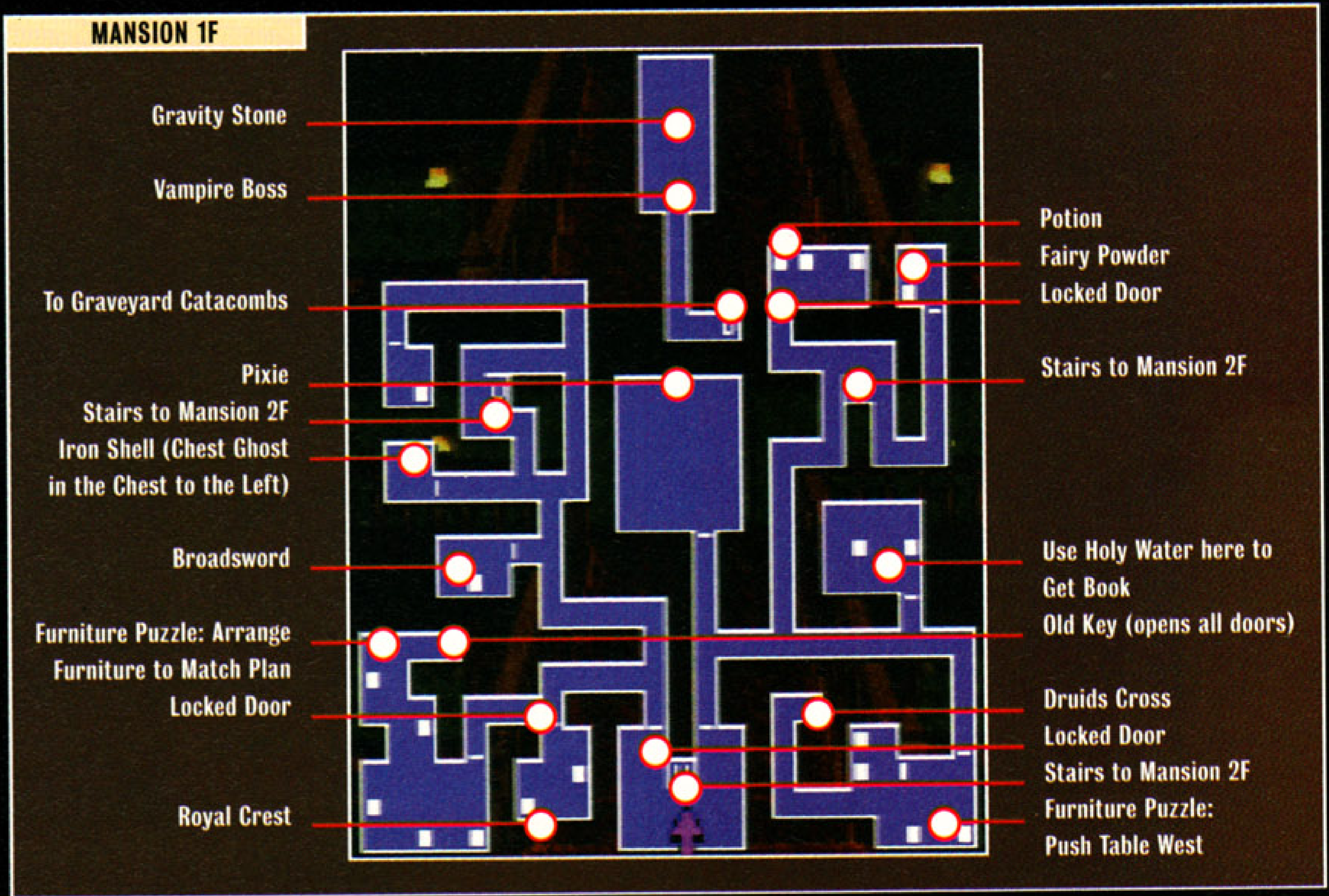


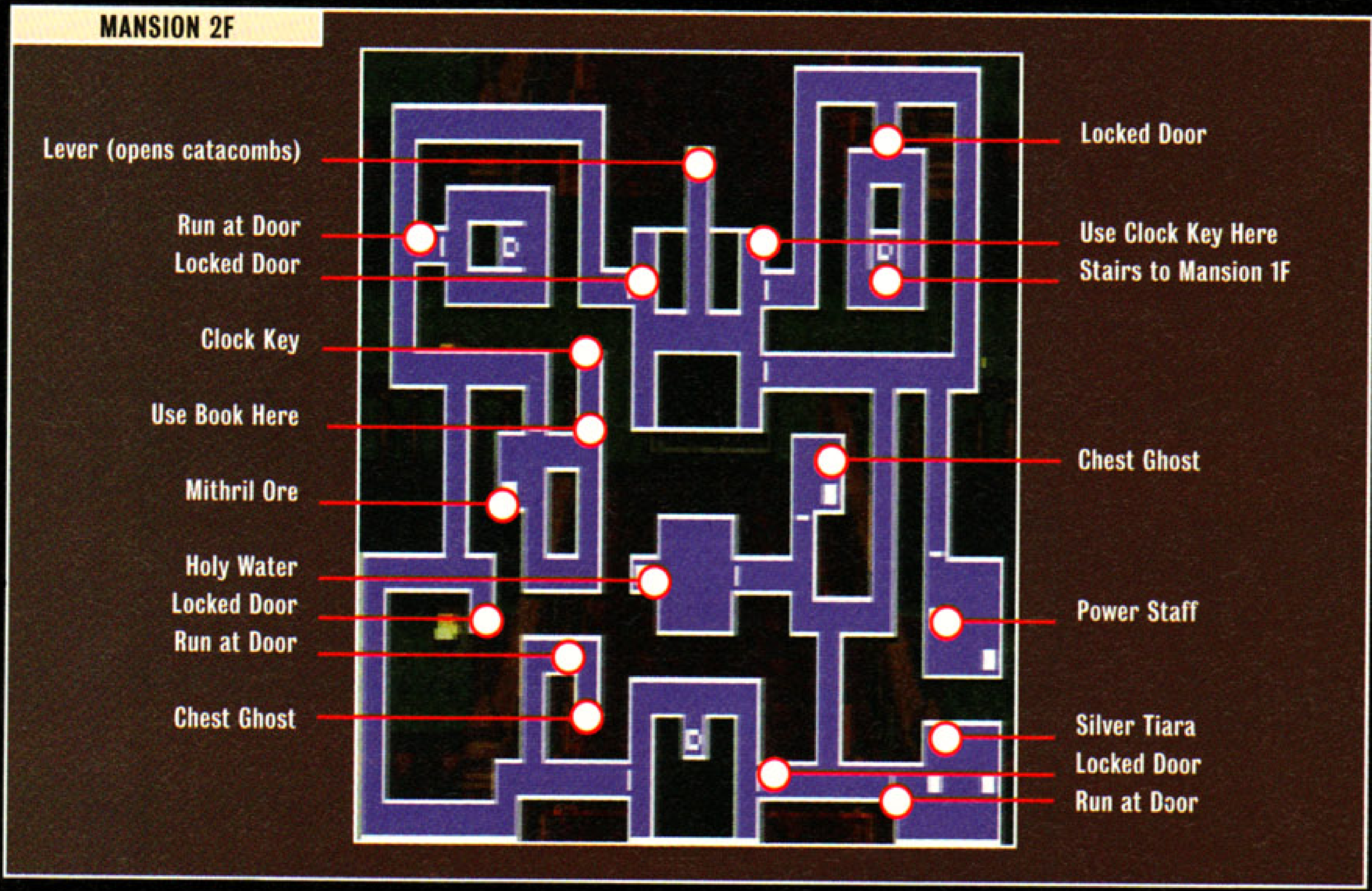


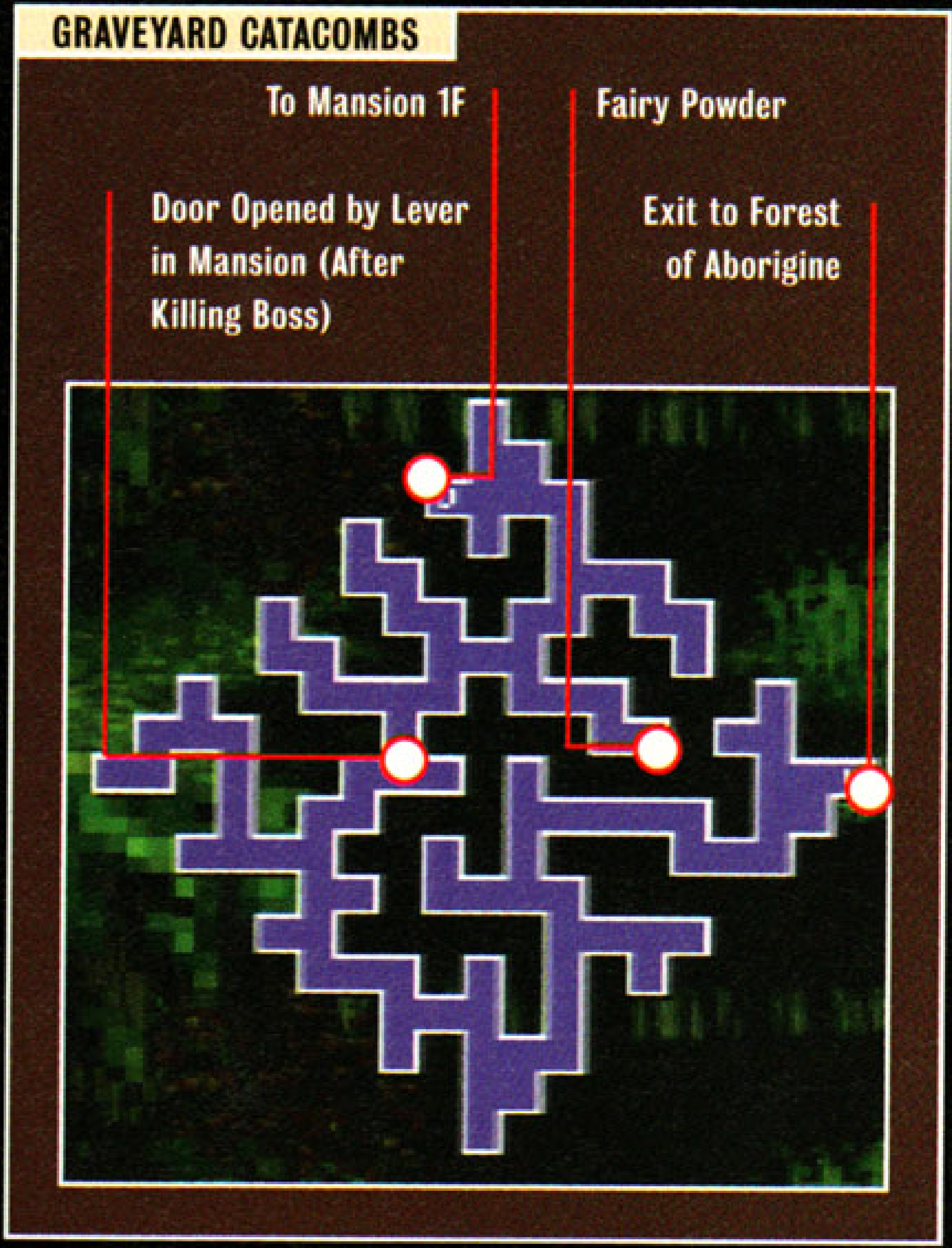




The Aborigine Forest needs to be negotiated in order to get to the Mansion (top). By this time of the game, you really need to be around level 17 (left). Furniture puzzles abound in the mansion (right) but the solutions are always simple.







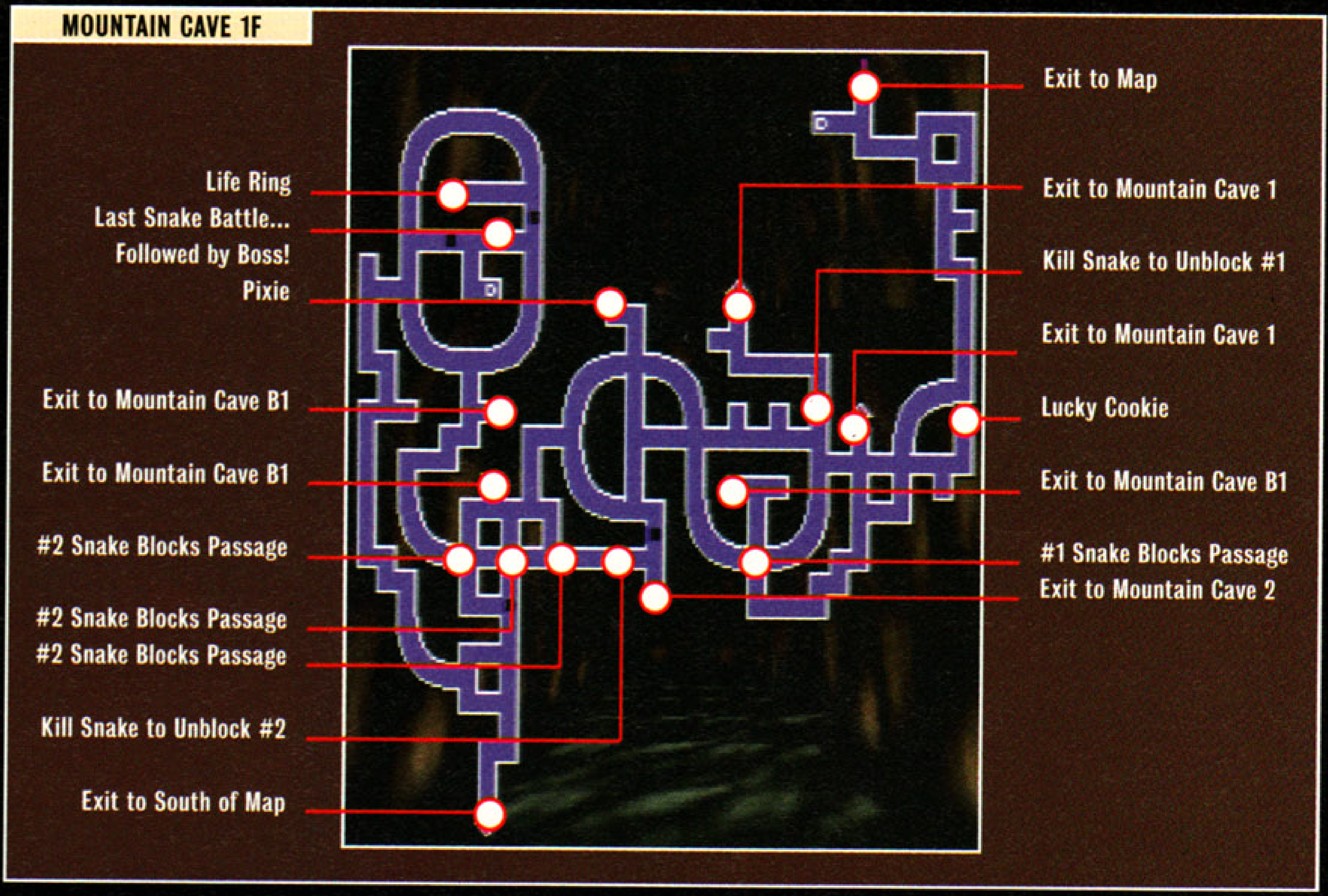
MOUNTAIN CAVES

A huge snake patrols the caves, blocking off passages and essentially herding you the right way through these passages. You meet the three-headed snake three times, each time fighting it in order to remove a head. Losing a head causes it to retreat, opening up the passages it blocked.

A couple of times you end up outside walking on ice. Here when you move you move two spaces instead of one, so plotting a path around the holes is quite a task. Should monsters jump out of the holes, use magic on them. They multiply quickly and only spells that attack more than one target do the job. To get to the chests here, search out the non-ice bits of ground. Here you move one space as usual and this should set you up to get to the chests.

The last time you face the snake, beware! Once you've defeated it, you face the big boss of the level - an even more powerful snake!

Once defeated, travel to the Far East Village to get some story info plus the best weapons so far! The village is populated with ninja and their weaponry is superb. Get tooled up and head for the South Shrine!







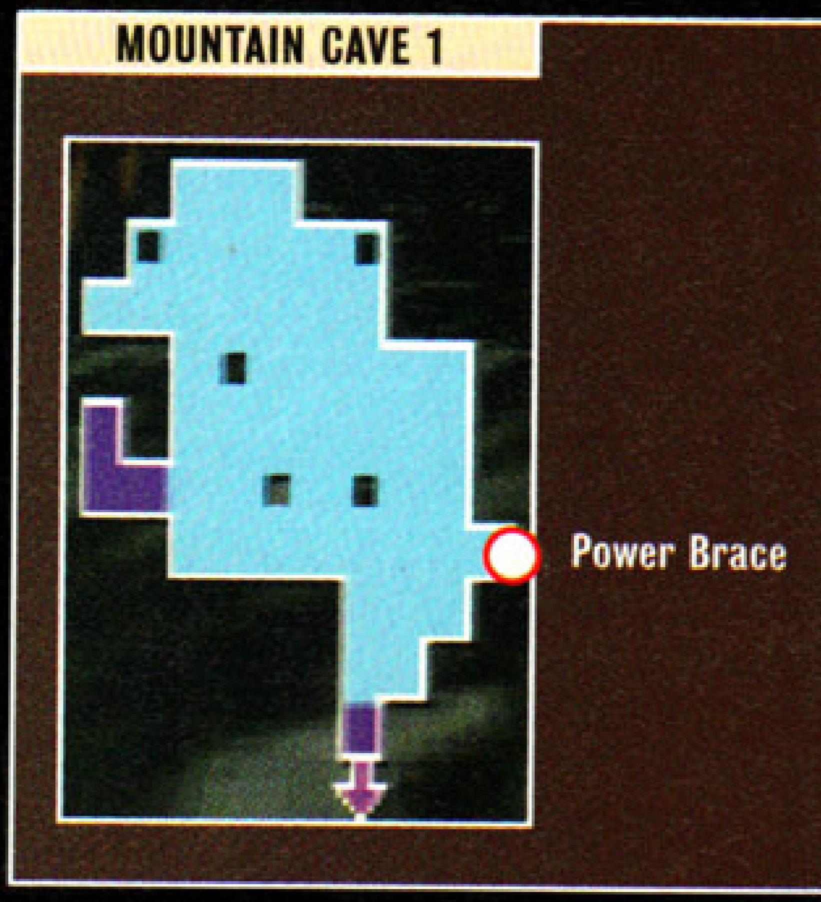


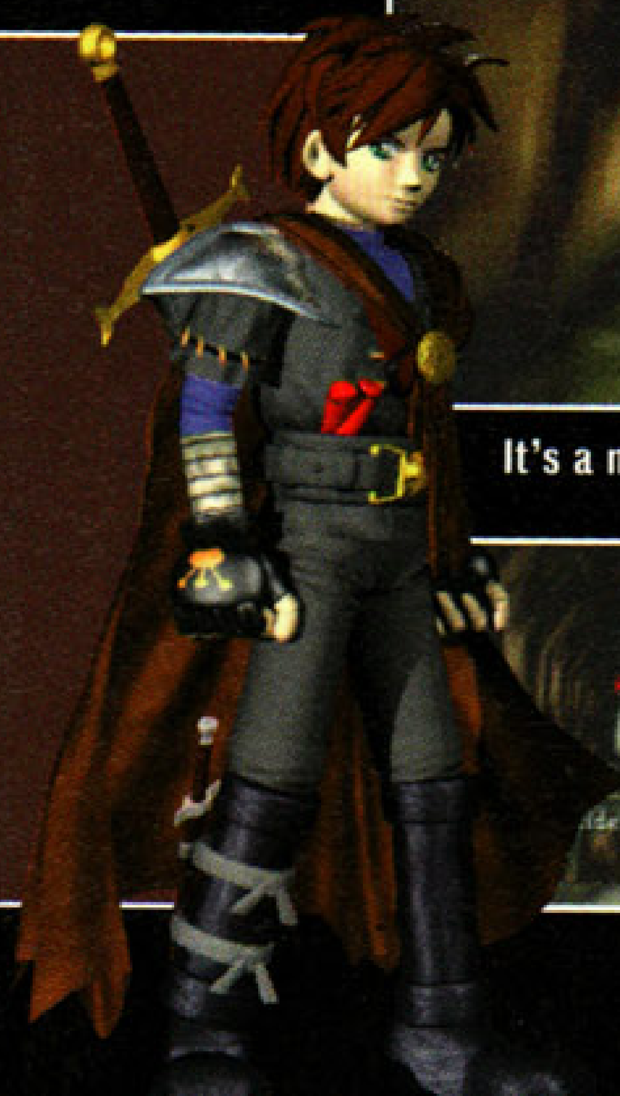
It's a mega enemy attack! DESTROY THEM ALL!





The Mountain Caves... outside and inside - you go everywhere!



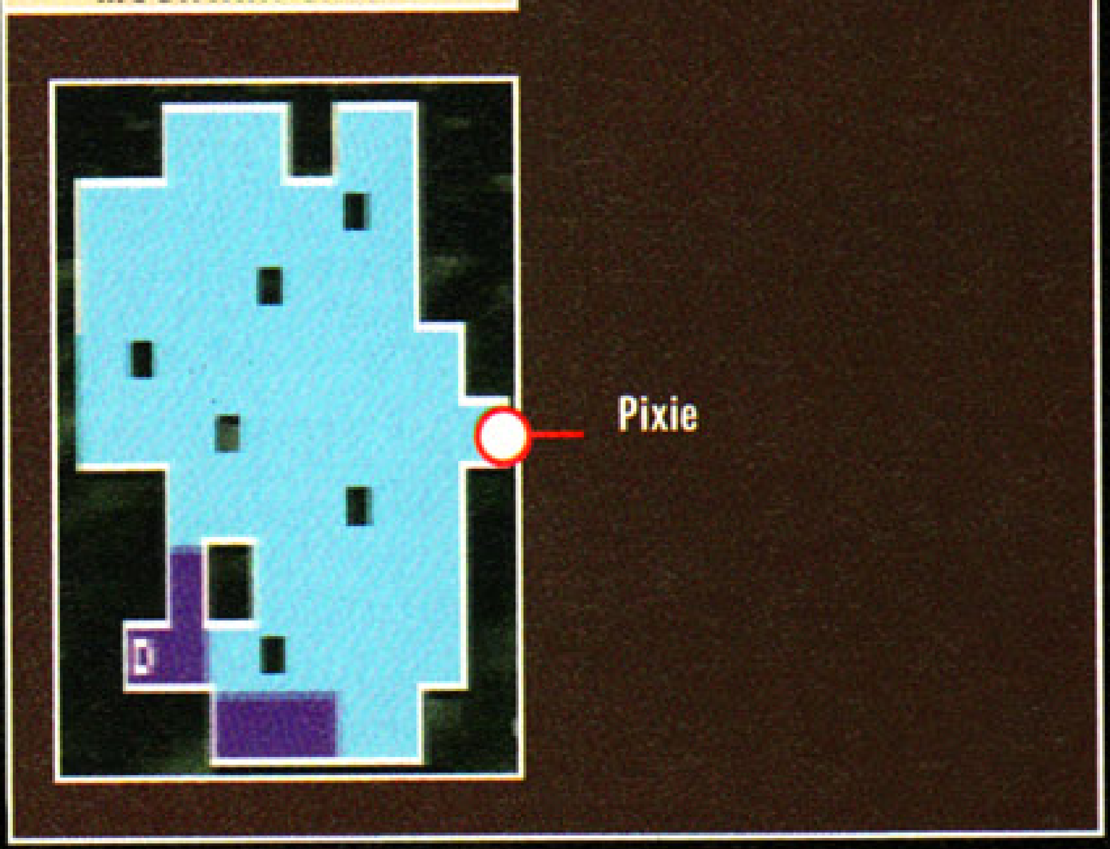








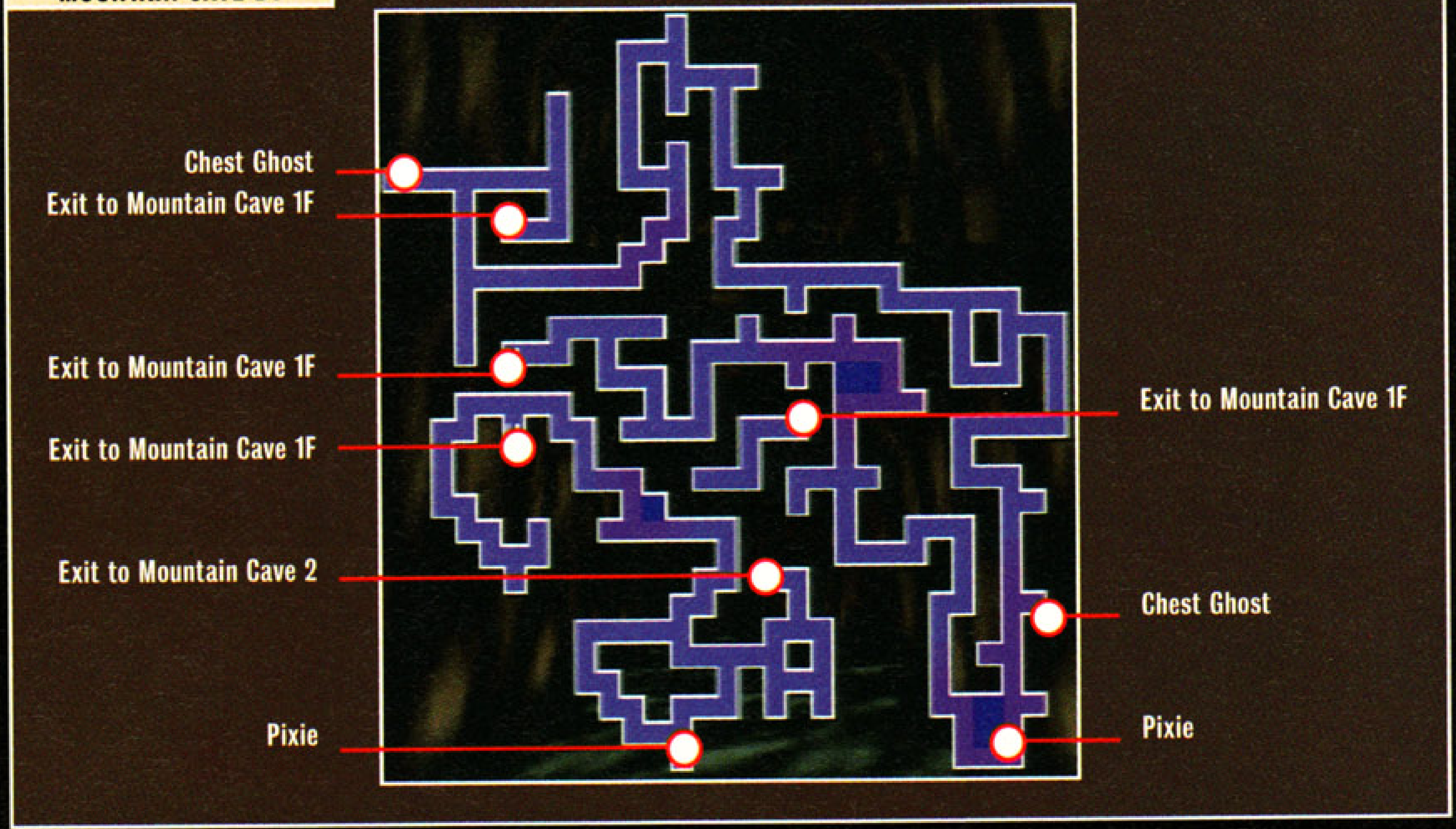
MOUNTAIN CAVE 2







MOUNTAIN CAVE B1



SOUTH SHRINE

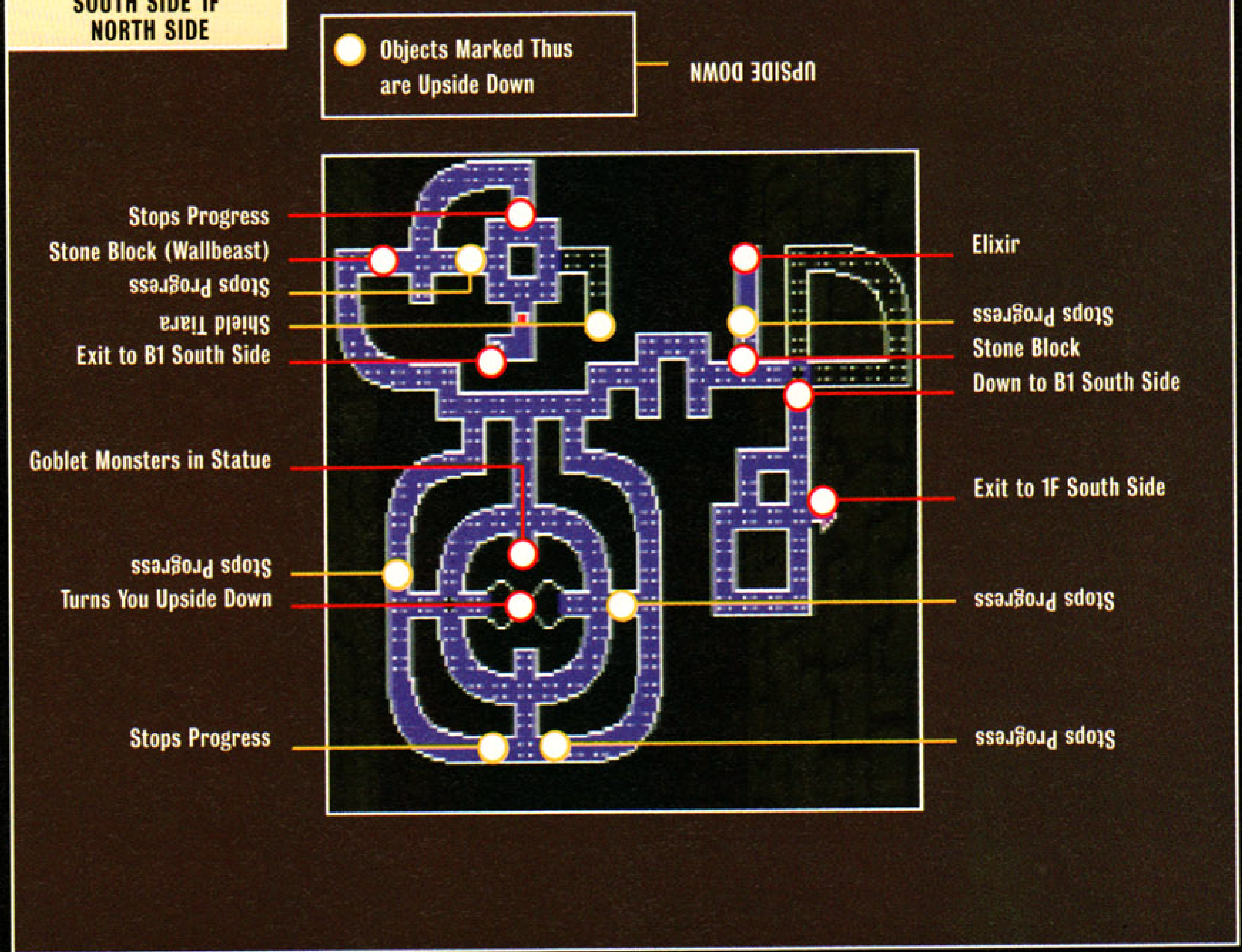
This is the first shrine you battle and it's also by far the toughest! Not only is it the biggest, you also tackle a lot of it upside down. It would take pages and pages of writing to hold you hand and guide you through, but the maps supplied will help. All objects collected whilst upside down are writted upside down so as not to confuse you any more than you will be.

Basically, head for South Shrine B2 East Side. This has a magical axe which can cleave through the stone blocks indicated on the map. Once you have this, the path is open to get to South Shrine Centre. You need to get here by using the exit on South Shrine B1 North Side - but you have to be upside down when going through the inverter before the exit... or a huge boulder sends you flying down the hole to the north!

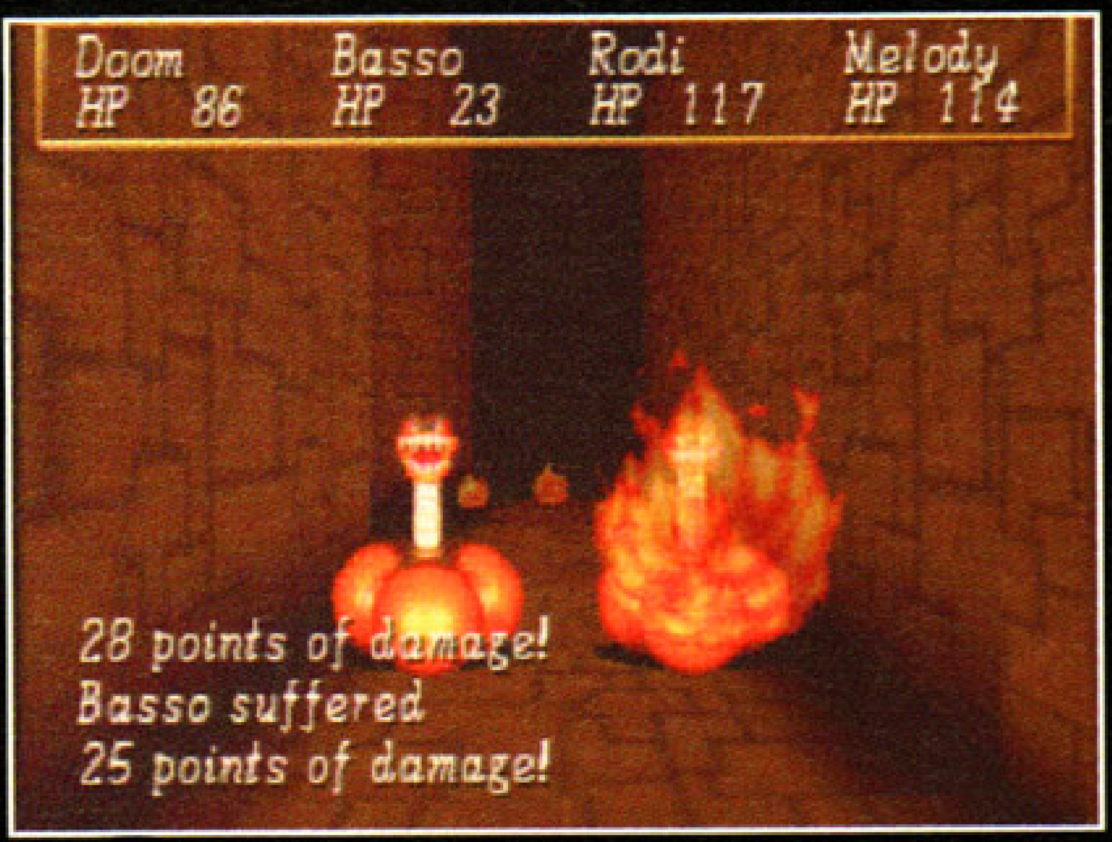
Once in South Shrine Central, the king of all logic puzzles awaits! Seven stones must be distributed between two statues, four in one, three in the other. But the value of the stones must be IDENTICAL! This is a toughie and we printed the full way of working it out last issue because we knew a lot of you would be stuck here. This time I'll just give you one solution (out of many): give one statue the Sapphire, the Black Onyx, the Opal and the Ruby. Give the other the Aquamarine, Diamond and Emerald. Now collect the sword. You need to beat a boss before you actually get your hands on it.

Use physical attacks on the witch. If she sum-

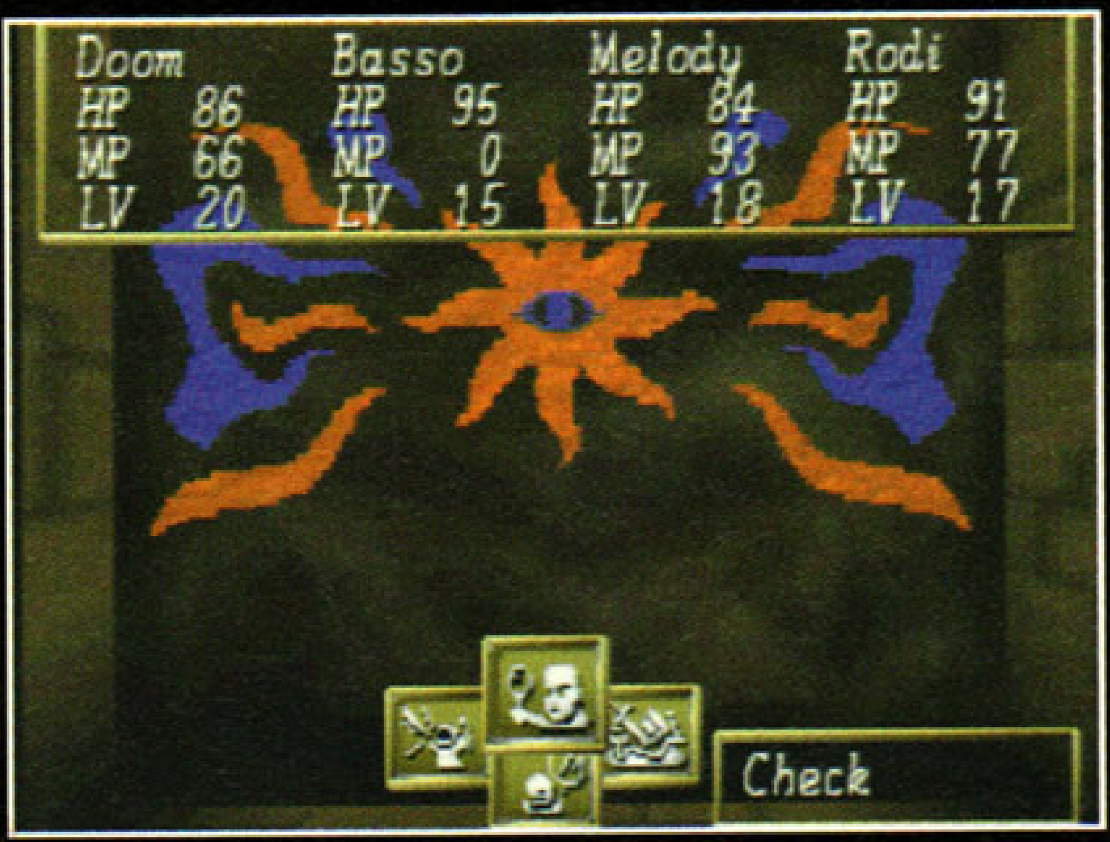
SOUTH SIDE 1F
NORTH SIDE





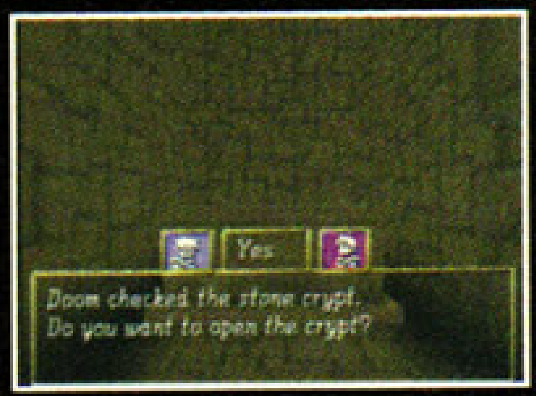


Your characters should be able to take punishment like this!



Use the Magic Mattock to hack past these Stone Blocks.

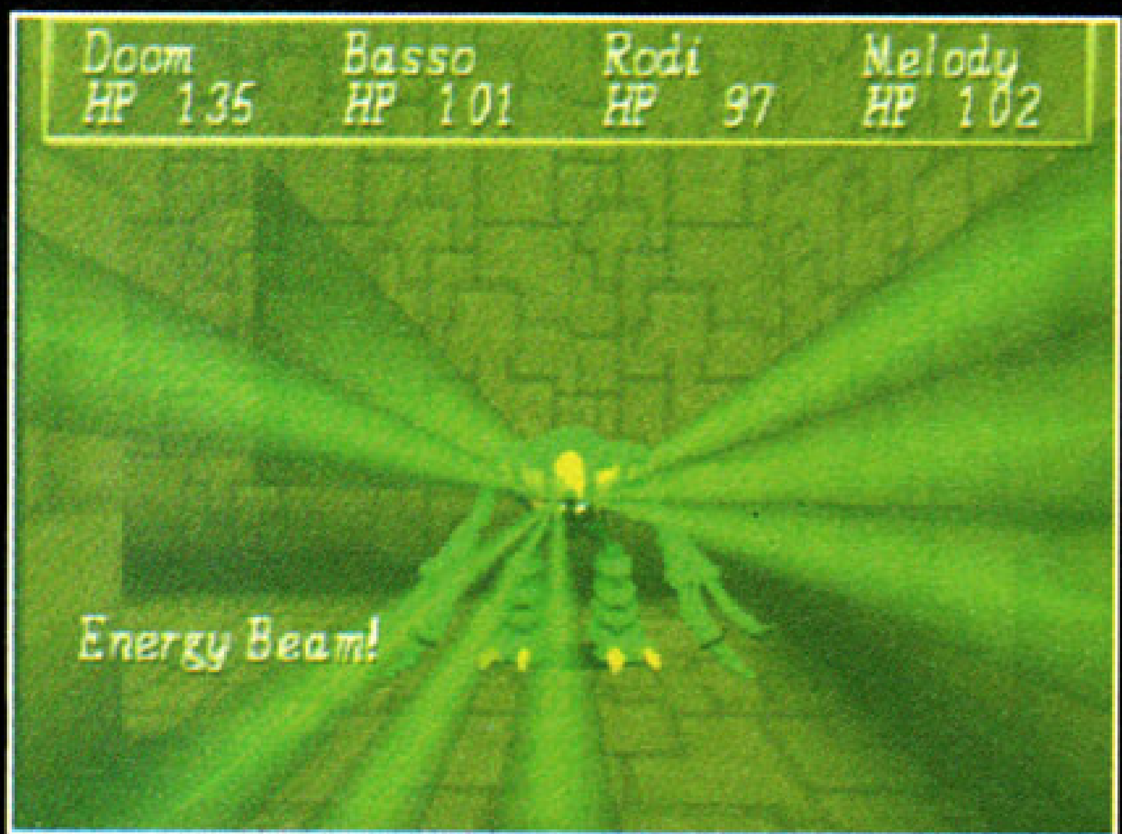


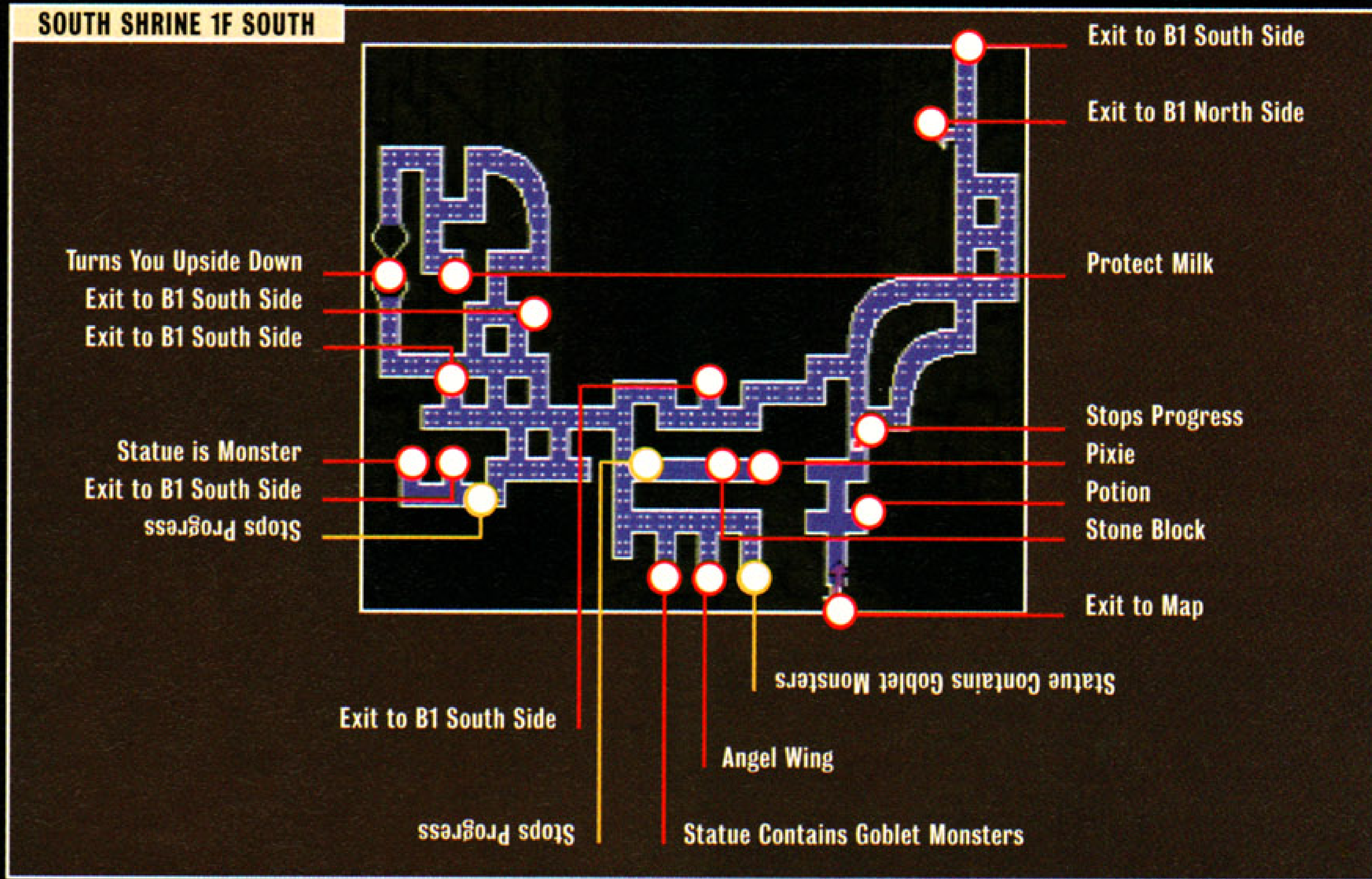


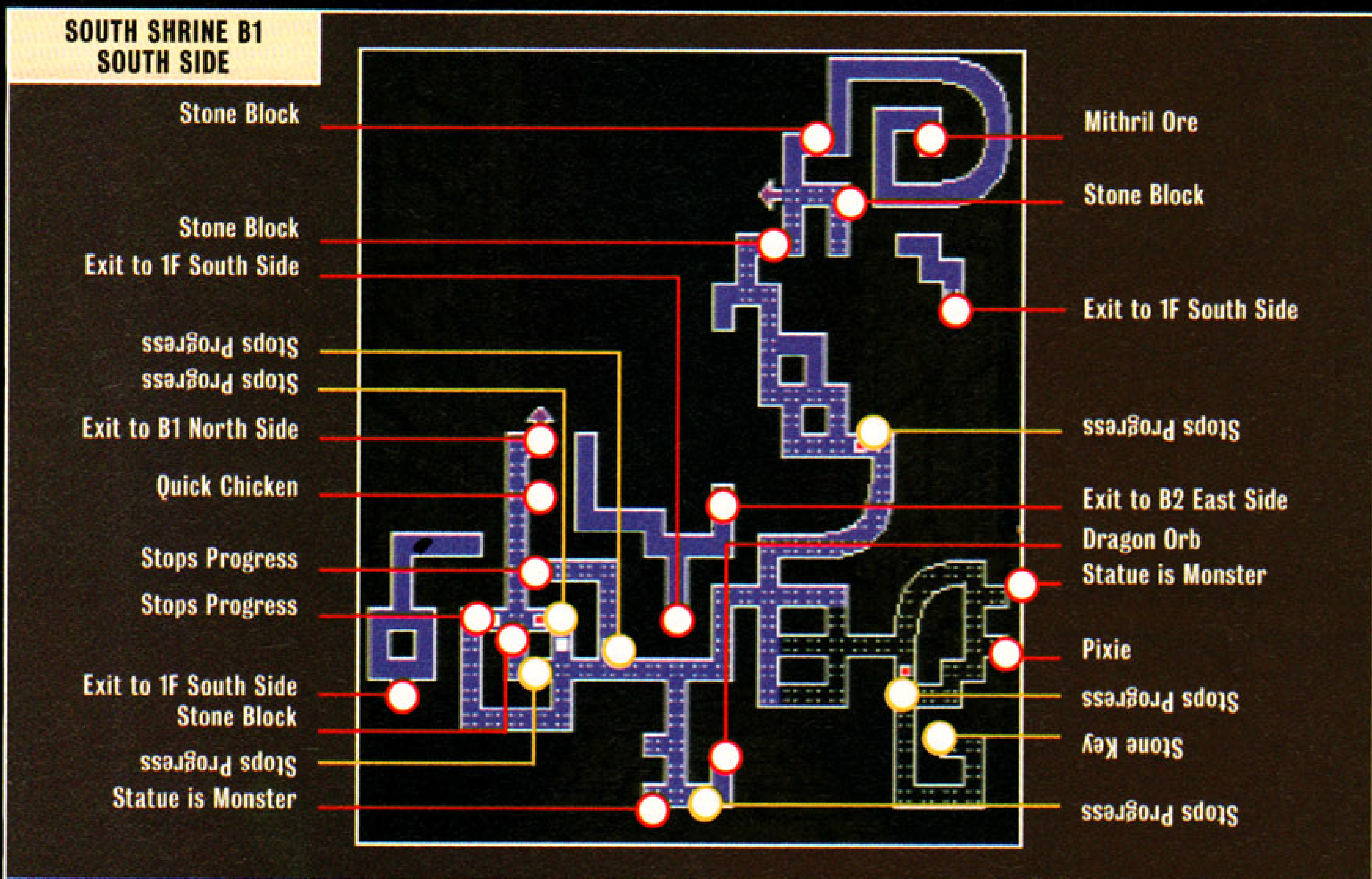
Statues and Crypts populate the deadly South Shrine.

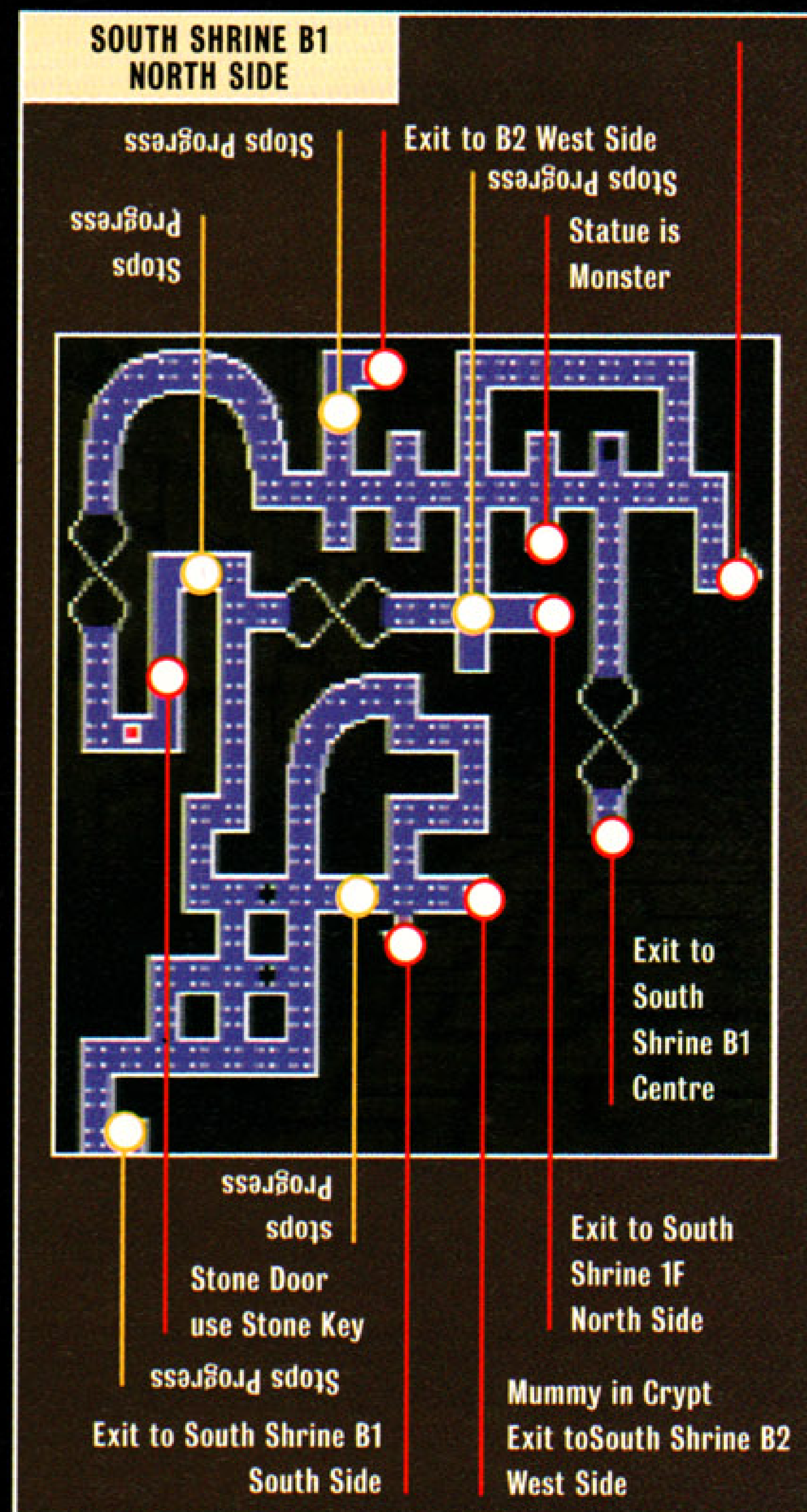
mons a mummy (which she will), have Melody and Rodi use their most powerful magic, with the others sticking to fighting the witch. Once defeated, get the Sacred Sword and head for the Far East Village.

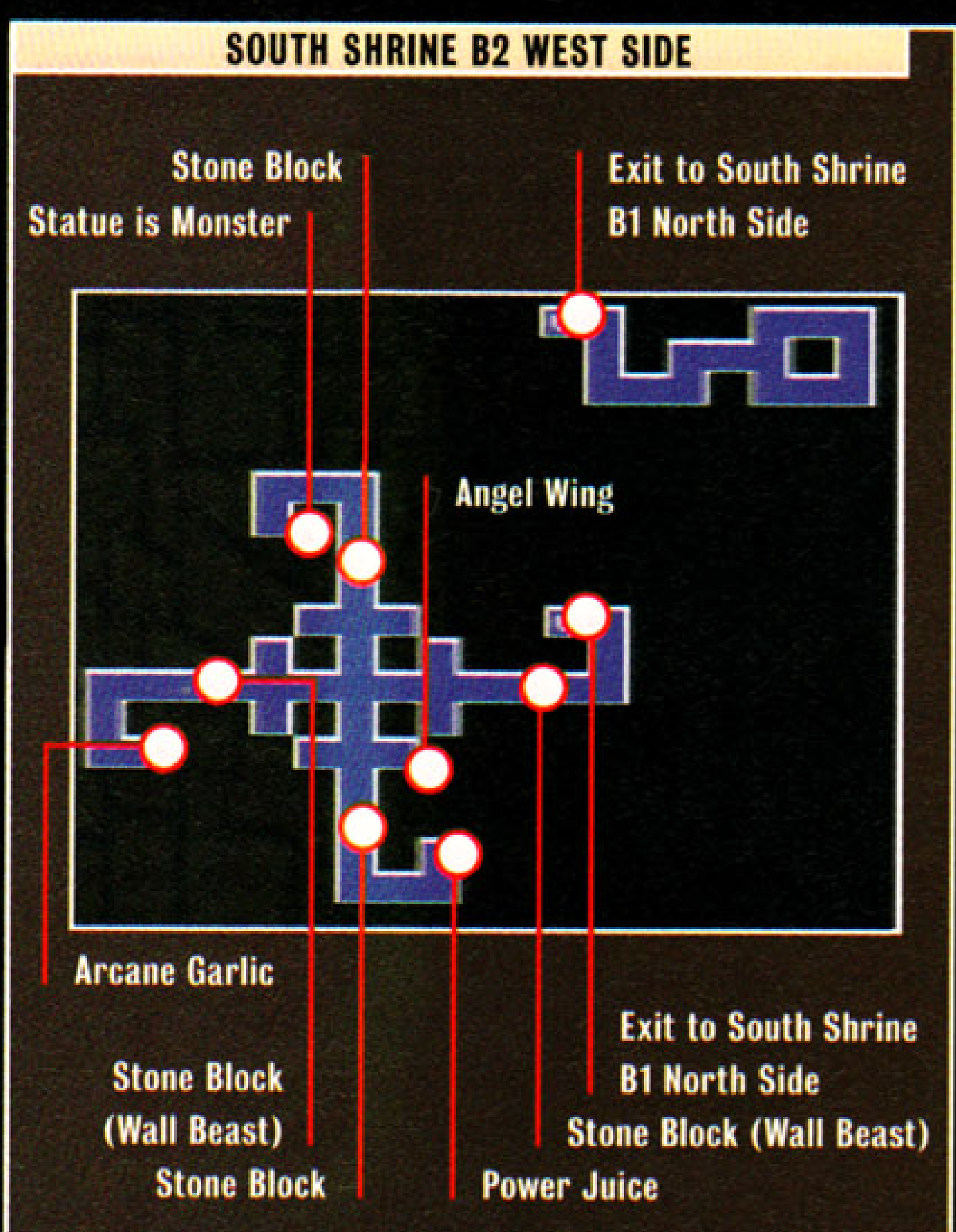
Visit the ninja master for some more plot development. Now you will have Akane (another ninja) joining your group. Get equipped up and visit the church. By now your main character should be level 20 or higher. Ask the priest to change class. Your main character can now wield Sacred Sword!

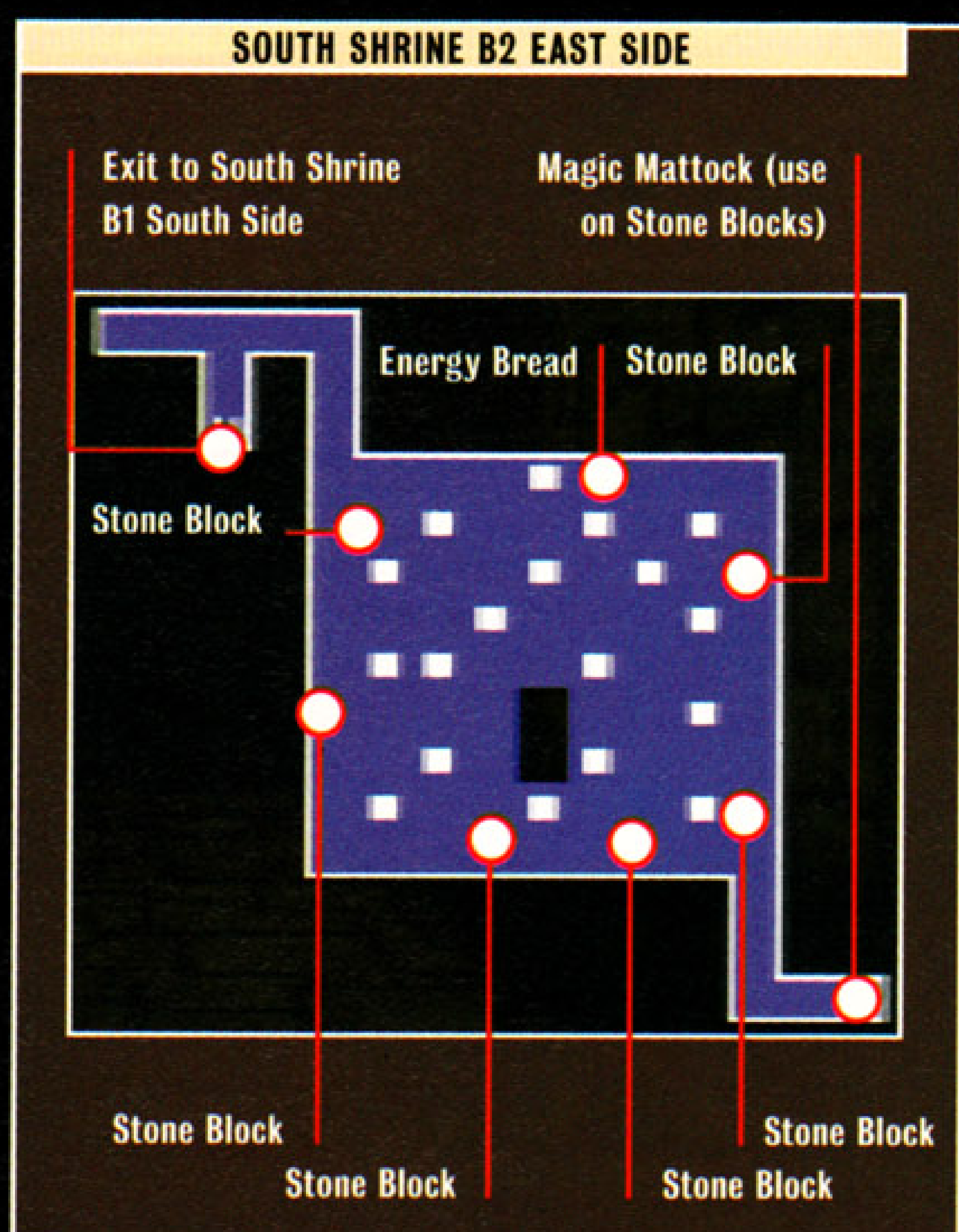


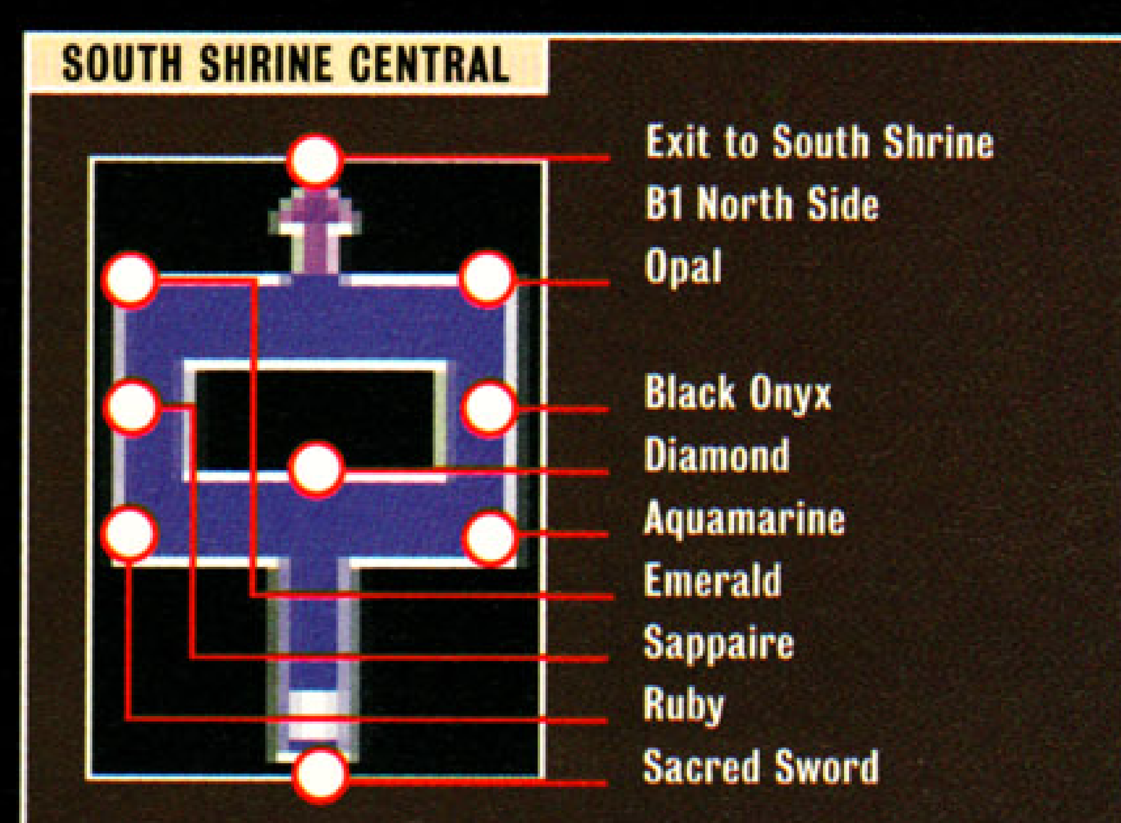












RETURN TO ENRICH DUNGEONS

Now you need to rescue the King and Forte from the evil spirits. Go to the town well in Enrich and go back to the dungeons. Go to the piers on the northeast of the map. On one of them, Akane will summon a boat which takes you to the dungeons. Fight your way through the dungeons and into Enrich Castle.

The Evil Spirits challenge you to a fight. Switch Melody for Akane and have your character and Basso take on one spirit each physically with Akane and Rodi using magic. Once one spirit is defeated, switch Melody for Akane and get all characters back to full health before finishing the spirit off.

Once they're defeated, Sabato appears and you need to use the Sacred Sword on the spirits. Now you fight them again only Rilix the witch is in the mix too. Melody is the key to success here (that's why you left her out of the first fight). Melody's Support magic is highly important, as are her healing skills. If her health ever goes below 100 use a level three heal spell on her. She's the key to the battle.

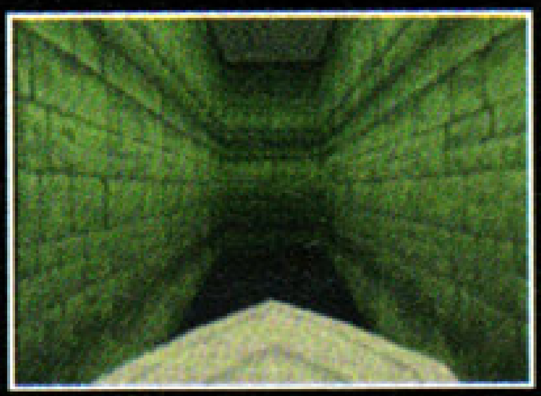
Switch Basso with Akane or Forte. If doesn't matter if the latter two die, just get in as many magic attacks as possible. It's also a good idea to have plenty of potions (five each character) bought from the Far East Village.

This is a very tough battle...



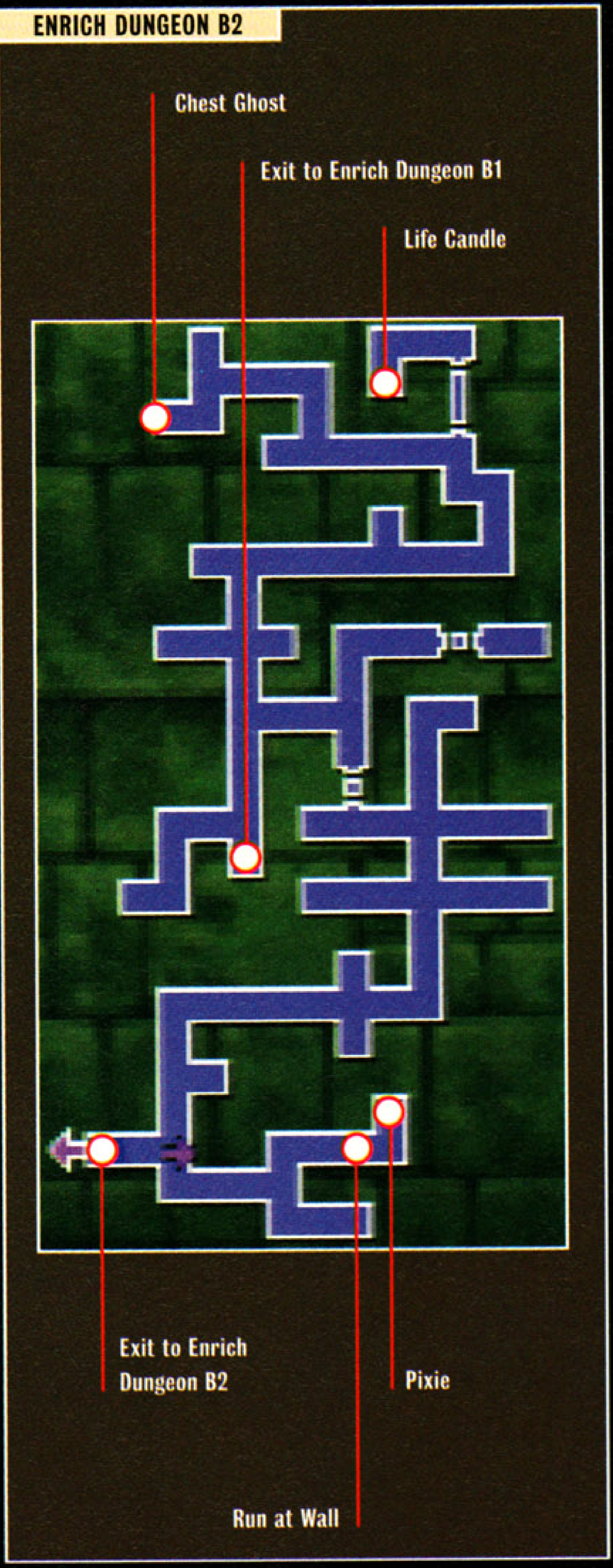


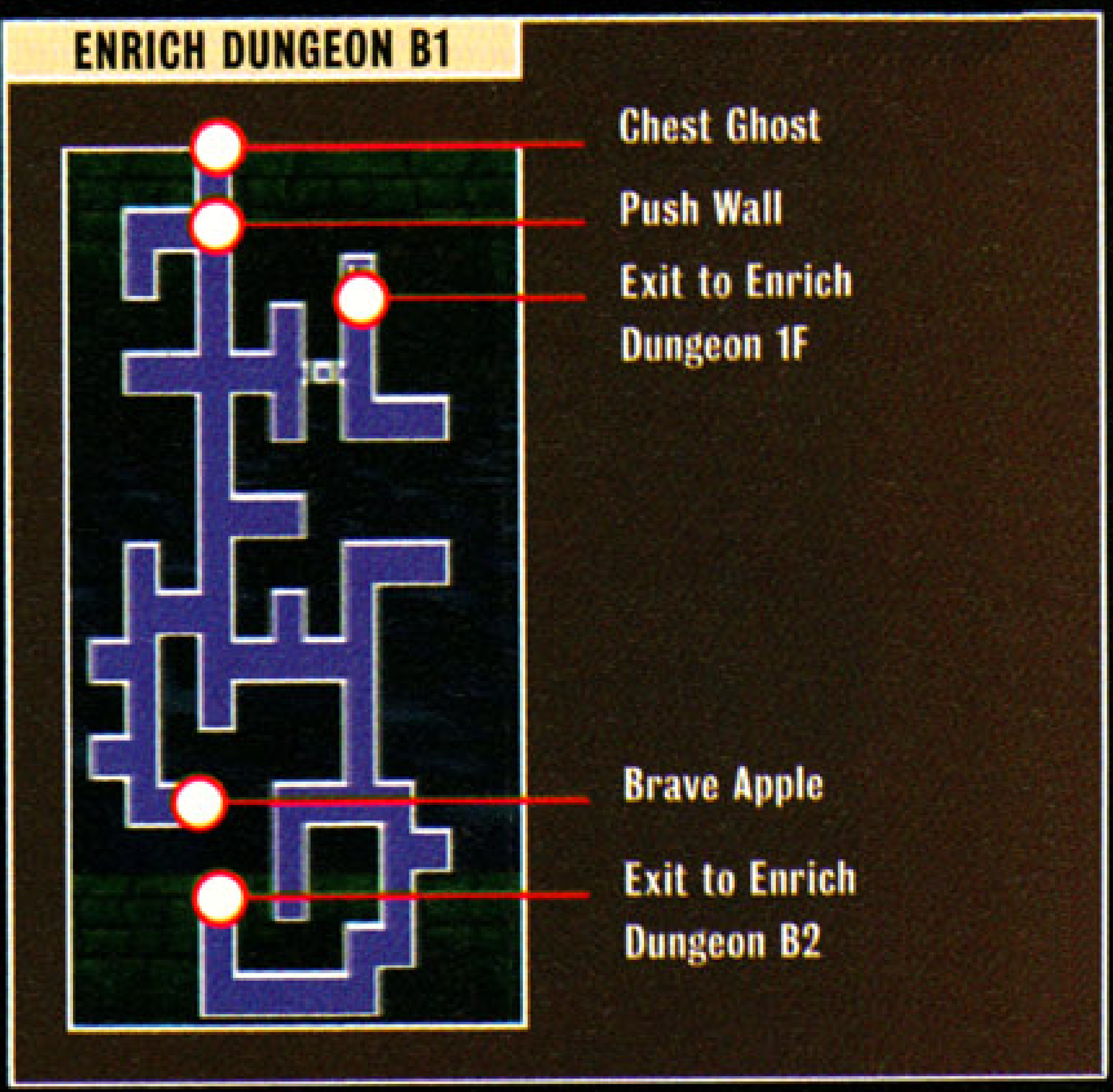
Akane joins the party and leads you to a boat in the dungeons.

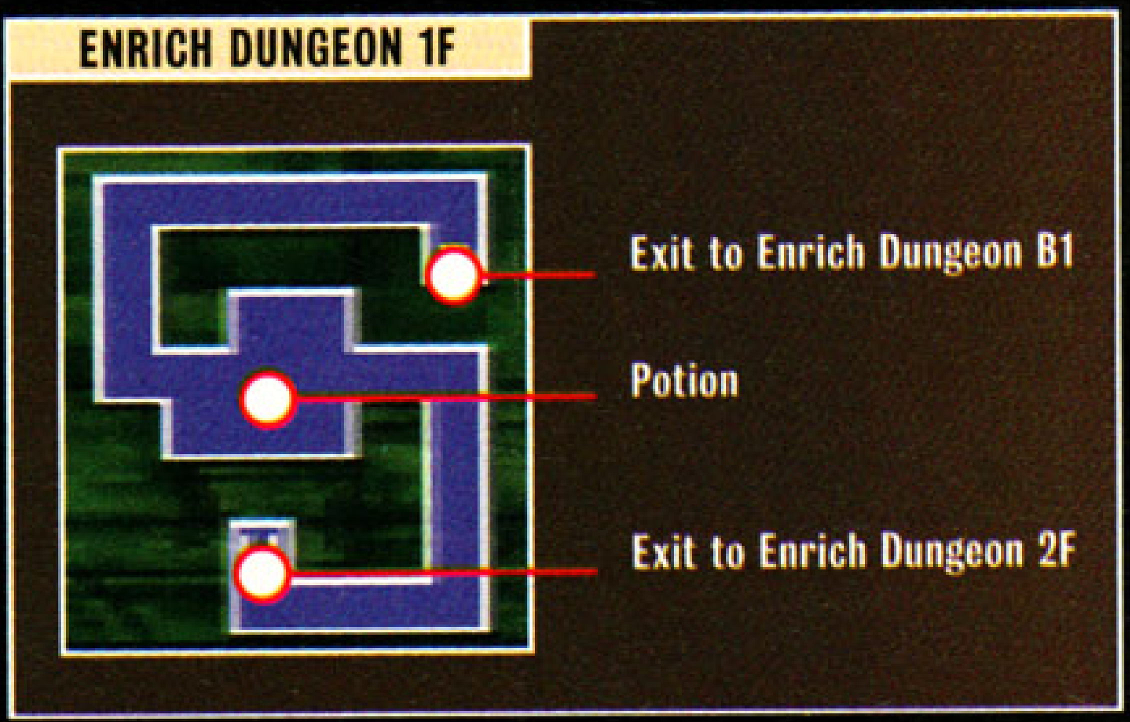




All manner of secrets are in the Enrich Dungeons!

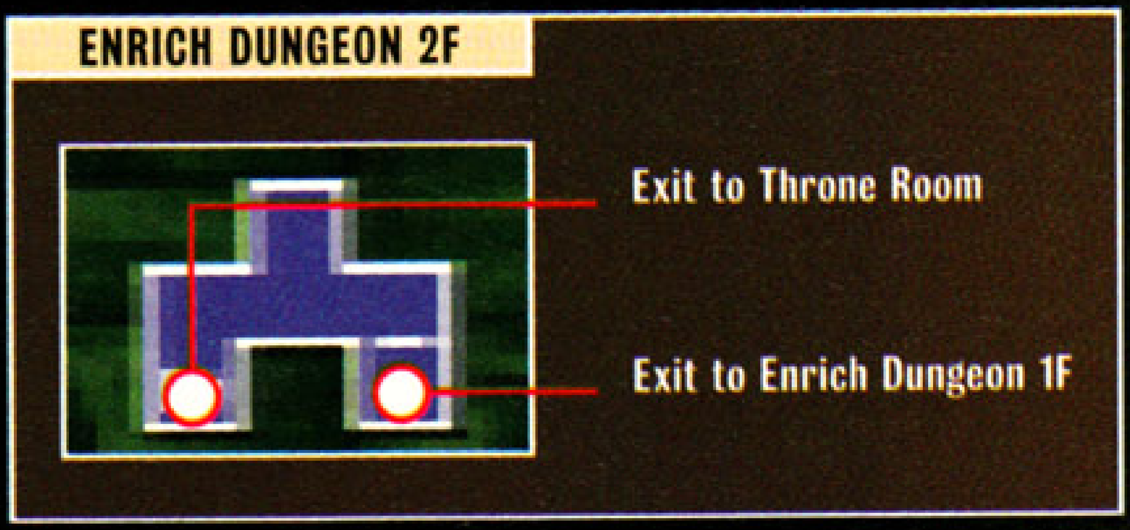








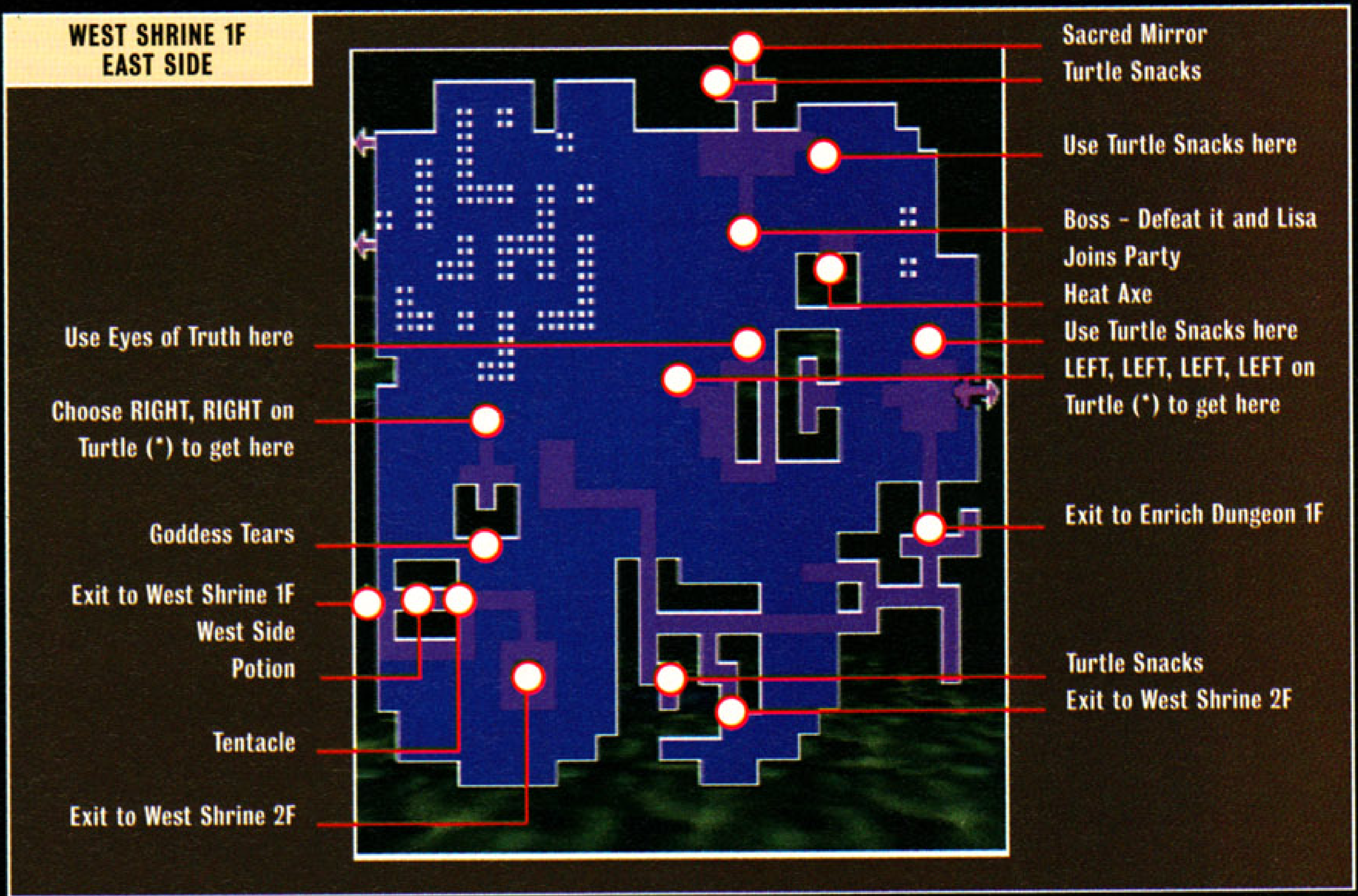




WEST SHRINE

Break down the seal with the Sacred Sword. Then it's just a case of locating the turtle snacks, feeding them to the turtles and then moving on and repeating the process. Again, there's only really one route through and with the maps to help you, you shouldn't have any difficulties. Locate the Eye of Truth, use it where it says so on the map and that leads the way



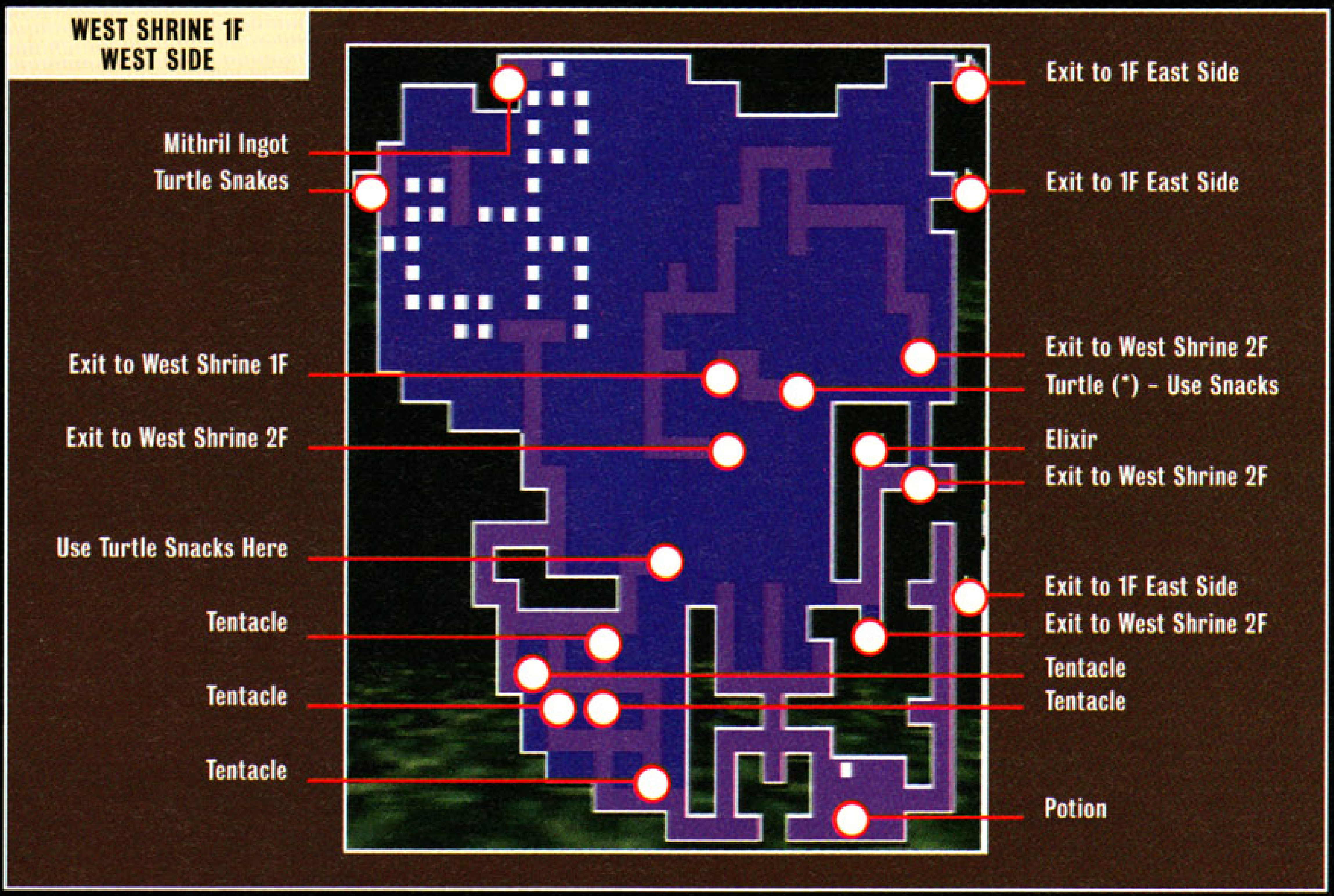


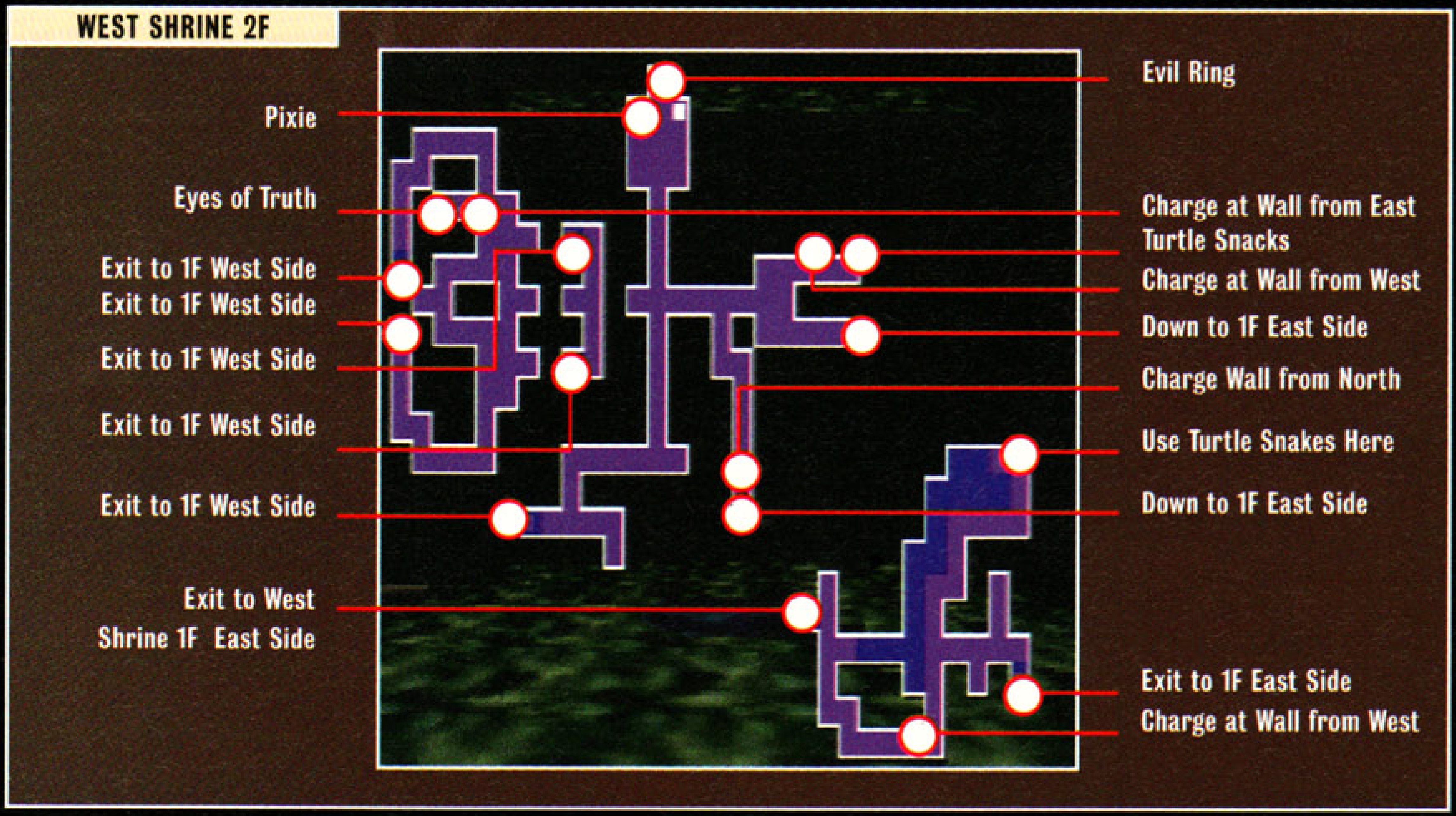
to the boss confrontation. Again, concentrate on magical attacks until just the main boss creature is standing, then switch you characters for the physical battlers then finish it off. Once the boss is defeated, the Vandal Galm appears again and he's got Lisa with him, who joins your party - another strong physical battler. You also get the Sacred Mirror. It's good armour, but to be honest, by now you should have better, so leave it unequipped.

One note: on West Shrine 1F West Side there is a special turtle who gives you multiple choices on where you want to go. The map shows two possible destinations in West Shrine 1F East Side. To save confusion, from the beginning just choose either Left, Left, Left, Left to get to one area, or Right, Right to get to the other. This is so much easier than the South Shrine it's frankly unbelievable!











The Stone Blocks rise and fall. Consider your route carefully!





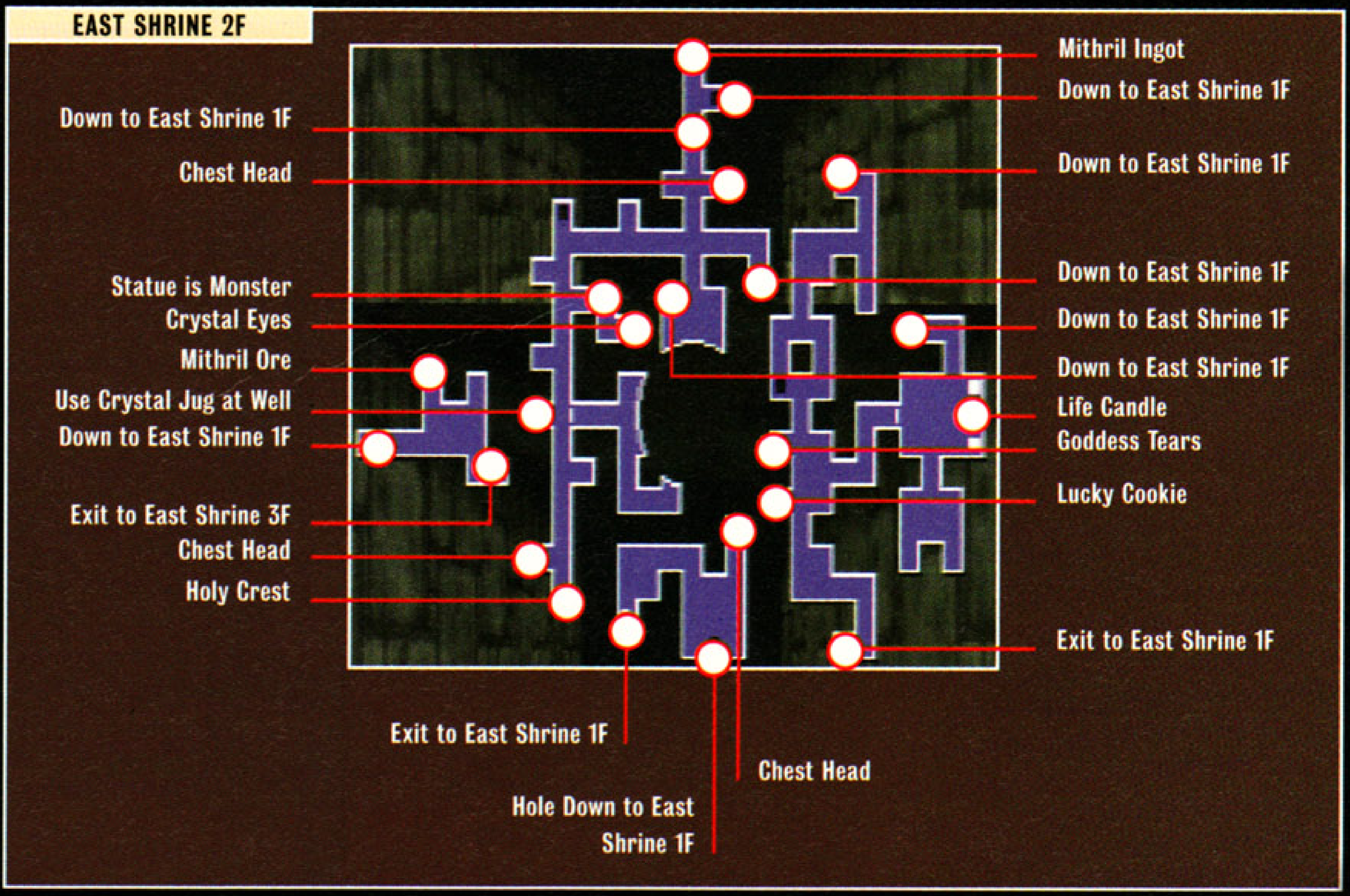
EAST SHRINE

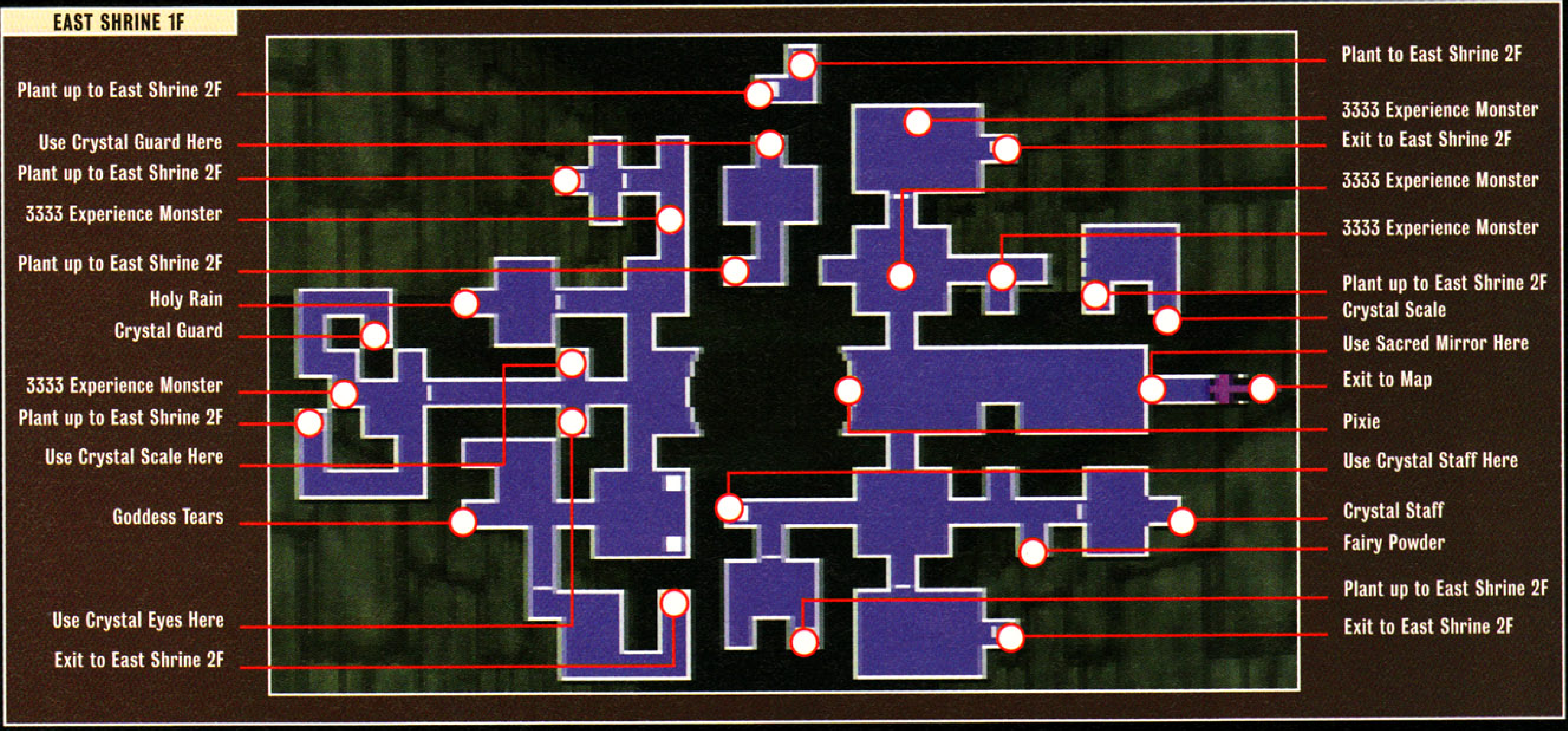
Two of the Sacred Artifacts are now in your possession, so it's time to head to the West Shrine and finish the set! This shrine is just as easy as the western one, despite the opposition being tougher. Simply use the Sacred Mirror to get into it, then find the crystal objects and match them up with the statues. It's all in the maps.

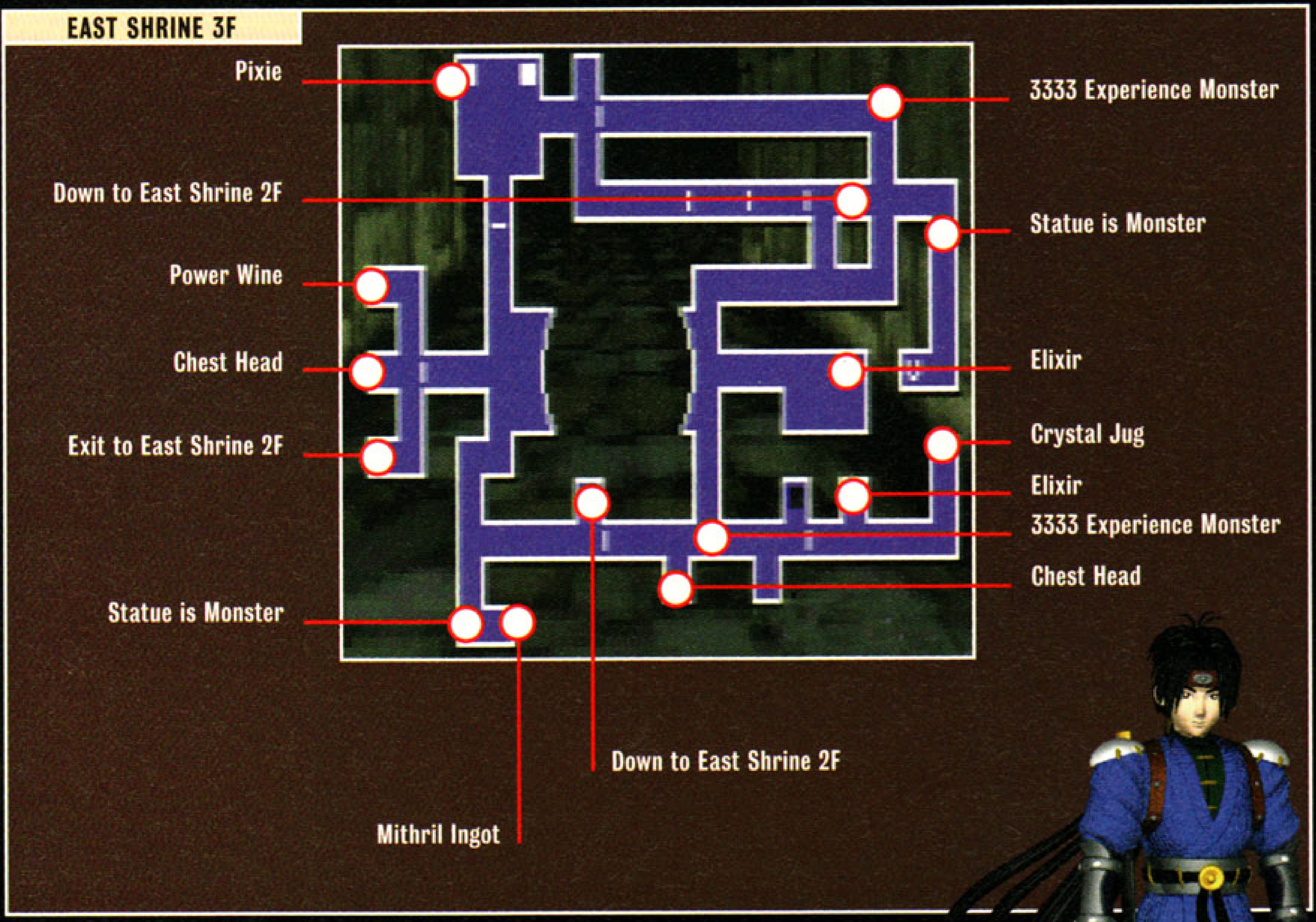
Now the well is working and you can use it to get maximum energy back for all members of your band. You also need to get some water from the well to the shrivelled plant on East Shrine 4F. To do this you need to get the Crystal Jug from the south-eastern corner of East Shrine 3F.

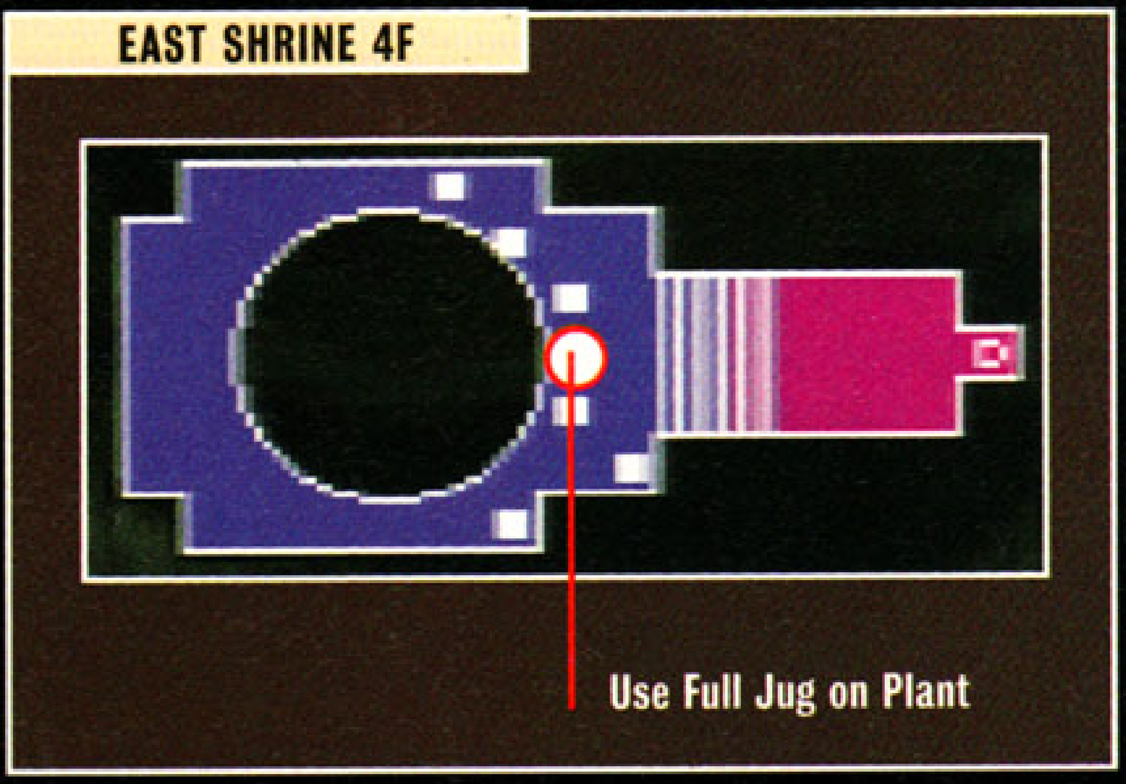
To get there simply stand next to the rotating floor that's next to the door. Point south and hold down B. Now press Left to move and then Forward quickly. This should take you through without falling down the hole to the north.

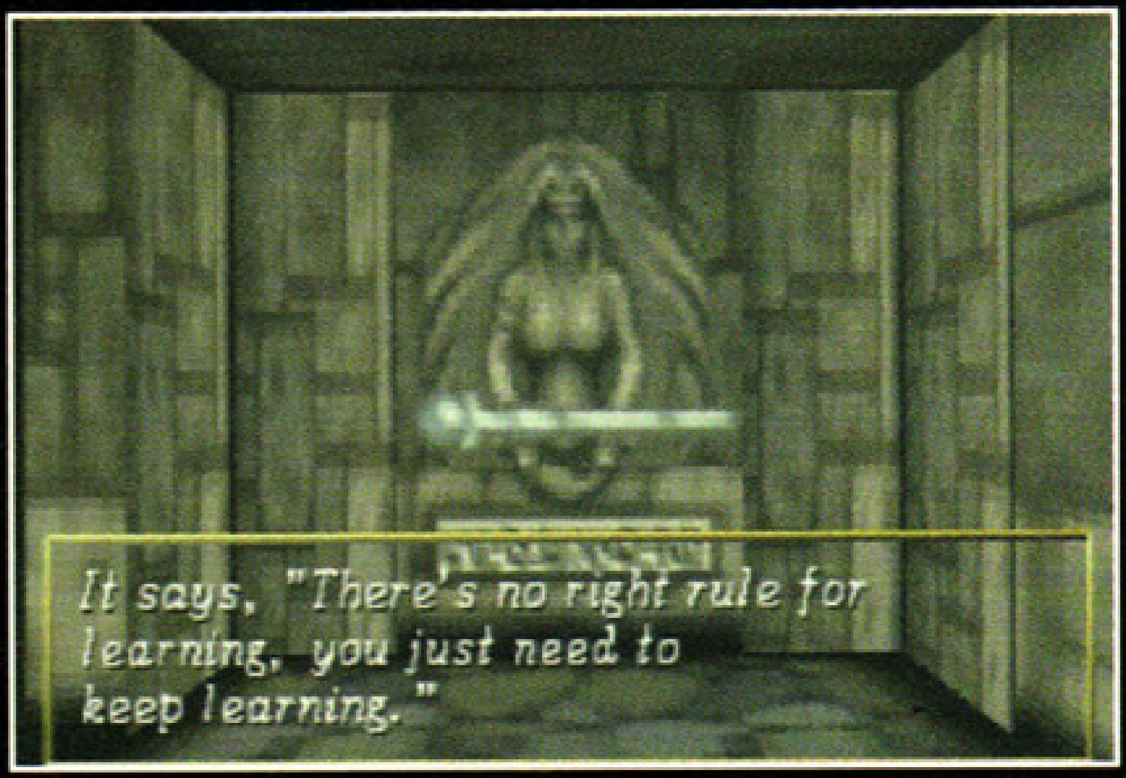
Use the water on the plant on East Shrine 4F. This is the boss creature, who should be a cinch to defeat. Why? Because by now your characters are all supremely powerful, if you use the following technique...













THE 3333 EXPERIENCE MONSTER

This creature pops up all the time on the East Shrine. In fact, he pops up in the same places, which we've marked on the East Shrine maps. Defeating this creature gives you 3333 experience points - a vast amount that virtually guarantees you an extra level for every character (until they become super-powerful any way).

This monster scares easily and if he retreats it can be very frustrating. We've found that he attacks more often if your characters are not on top energy and if there is a lack of fighters in your line-up who can perform healing magic. Also make sure your fairies don't get any attacks in first - it just scares the creature.

Use physical attacks from your main character, Basso, Lisa and Rodi and there's your best chance of the creature staying the fight. To begin with, three rounds are required to defeat it. However, the more times you defeat it, the more levels you get and thus the fights become a lot shorter!





Use the Hattori monster to shoot through levels!





NEXT MONTH

We journey into the final part of our unbeatable Shining guide as we finally destroy the evil that threatens to engulf the land of Enrich! We'll have more maps, more solutions and an in-depth fighting strategy guide. Contrary to what you may have read elsewhere, the combat system in Shining is very deep and quite complex - especially when fighting the bosses. We reveal all

HEXEN GUIDE PART 3

Will it ever end? That's what you're probably asking yourselves at this very moment. Fortunately the answer is yes, for this is the final part of our mammoth guide to the monster mash that is Hexen. So with a heavy heart, Stephen Fulljames dons his shiny Marks and Sparks chain mail and prepares to 'whup' demonic arse for the very last time. Sob.

EPISODE FOUR: THE CASTLE OF GRIEF

When you first enter this episode, the clock inside the castle is not working. You can see parts of the machinery behind four rusty panels in the clock room, and a gear is missing from the machinery behind each panel (Tomb Raider, anyone?). You have to find the four gears and fit them back into the machinery. Once the clock is repaired, it will activate an elevator in the middle of the castle, which leads to the Gibbet. This is where you'll find the second of the two Heresiarches, but before that there are puzzles to solve.

THE CASTLE

You need to raise the bridge that leads to the front entrance of the castle. The switches to raise the bridge are in two small niches in the water on either side of the bridge. Pull both of them, and steps will be raised. Now you can get into the castle.







ABOVE: This little round critter is one of the four clock gears you must locate on this level.
RIGHT: And this is the clock that need fixing. Stick the gears in the holes around the room to mend it.

FIRST GEAR

This one is the easiest to find. From the front entrance of the castle, go inside and go right. Enter the dark room on this side, which I'll refer to as the west room.





The gear is sitting in the middle of the room, but grab it quick or nasty stuff might happen.

SECOND GEAR

This one is also easy. It's in the big round room in the centre of the castle courtyard, opposite the entrance to the west room. This is also where the portal to the Gibbet can be found. The gear is once again in the middle, where there's a circle of eight pillars with masks on them.





THIRD GEAR

This gear is in the room in the far left corner of the castle as you enter it. You need to activate five switches in order to get it. Each of the five switches are located in one of the five towers around the castle battlements. To get up to the battlements, jump on the window sill on the right side of the room where you got



the last key. There's a switch behind the pillar here - pull it and the four lifts in the front and back of the castle will be activated. Now you can get on to the battlements and find those switches.

THE BATTLEMENTS

The battlements are split into two parts, on the sides of the castle. The left battlement connects three towers, and the right battlement connects two. Take the lifts up, and look for a skull switch in each of the five towers. After all five of them are activated, go to the room where the gear is. Stairs will have lowered at one corner of the room, so you can get the gear on the shelf at the bottom. Once you get the gear, fireball traps on the floor will activate. Run through them quickly to get back into the courtyard of the castle.

FOURTH GEAR

The final gear is also found in the Gibbet Room, but this time it's on a platform that you can't quite reach. To lower this platform, you need to press four switches which are hidden around the castle. Three of them are hidden in alcoves around the outside wall, the fourth is in a similar alcove in the far left corner of the castle (behind the third gear room). After you activate all four switches, the platform in the Gibbet Room lowers, the gear on it.



INTERLUDE: PORTAL TO THE FORSAKEN OUTPOST

While you're looking for the hidden switches outside the castle walls, you'll have probably noticed a small opening in one corner with a portal inside. This portal leads to the Forsaken Outpost. There are two items in there, the Libra Obscura and the Daemon Codex, which you need to solve the puzzle of the Gibbet; so you should go and get them now. Also, there's plenty of ammo there, for those of you who are running







short of firepower. The Forsaken Outpost is pretty straight forward if you explore every nook and cranny, so to save space we're not gonna cover it. Sorry.

SECRET LEVEL: DESOLATE GARDEN

If you pulled the switch in the Sacred Grove way back in Episode two, a portal opens behind the Daemon Codex in the Forsaken Outpost when you grab it. This portal leads to the secret level in this episode, Desolate Garden. It WON'T open unless you pulled the switch in Episode two - so if you didn't pull the switch back then, forget about going to the Desolate Garden.



FIXING THE CLOCK

Go to the Clock Room, which is in the far right corner of the castle. There are four panels in this room - each panel has the picture of a gear above it. Select the gear icons and fit them in, then the clock will start to move. You also get a message that says something has lowered in the Gibbet Room. Go there now, and get on







the lift that is now activated. At the top, activate the eight pointed switch. This teleports you to the Gibbet.

THE GIBBET

When you arrive in the Gibbet, pull the switch and turn around. The switch lowers the floor you're on, down into the Central Room. Monsters will attack you from behind if you don't turn around.

YORICK'S SKULL

Go to the Library Area which is straight opposite from the lift at the start of the level. There are two bookshelves on the wall which are actually Scooby Doo style rotating doors. The left bookcase leads to the library - this is where you should go first. Inside, look for the bookshelf that has a demon mask at the top. There are two empty slots between the books, which is where the Liber Oscura and the Daemon Codex you







This is the entrance to the library section in the Gibbet. Time for a spot of reading, perhaps?

collected in the Forsaken Outpost live. Slide them into the empty slots on the shelf, and several bookshelves will lower into the floor. You'll also notice that the books on the shelf now spell 'KORAX'. One of the lowered shelves has a skull on it. Now exit the libray area and go to the room on your right. Smash all the stained glass walls - behind one of them is a switch. Pull it and the broken bridge leading to the statue will be repaired. Walk up to the statue and use Yorick's Skull on it. Now leave the room and return to the central area. The pool here is leaking through a hole near the black pillar. You'll see an eight-pointed star here - flip it and you'll be warped to...

THE EFFLUVIUM

You start in a drain which flows into a pool of muck in the room at the far end. Firstly, though, you need to look for a switch in one of the small ledges on the side of the drain. The switch opens a portal back to the



Gibbet in one of the other ledges, and also lowers another drain on the other side of the room with the muck pool. Jump into the muck and go to the end of this other drain. There's a ledge on the right, which leads into another room filled with muck. There are windows in this room that look outside, and a door at the end of the room which lets you out to breath some fresh air. If you look carefully, one of the windows on the left has something on the outside sill. This is the Dungeon Key. Go out the door climb the low flight of steps. Walk over to where the windows are and grab the Dungeon Key. This is all you can do in the Effluvium at this point. Go back down the drain and step into the portal that the switch opened earlier, to return to the Gibbet.

BACK TO THE GIBBET

Return to the Library area and go through the rotating bookshelf on the right. You're now in a room with a cage, a bed, a bookshelf, and a ledge with a switch at the end. There's also a door that needs the Dungeon Key. Kill the Slaughtaur in the cage, and a wall beside it opens. This leads inside the cage itself, as well as into a room with many barrels. There's a secret passage in this barrel room that isn't open yet, so go back





ABOVE LEFT: The completed bookcase spells KORAX.
ABOVE RIGHT: Yorick's skull is the key to one puzzle.

to the room outside the cage. You need to pull the switch at the end of the wooden ledge. As soon as you pull the switch, the wooden ledge collapses into a really deep pit - so you must stand on the tiny piece of wood that's left in front of the switch! Then slowly turn around, and jump to get back to the solid floor! Now open the door with the Dungeon Key. Go inside the place that looks like a torture chamber, and turn right. The wall here should have opened when you pulled the last switch, and the room beyond contains a switch you need to pull. This lowers stairs in the room with barrels. Go there now , and go down the stairs at the far end of the room. At the bottom, turn right. There's a portal in the room here, which leads to the Dungeons.

DUNGEONS

You start in a small room with a portal leading to the Gibbet. The exit leads to a very large, dark room with a lava pool in the middle. Go in and climb down the stairs. On the south side of the room is a passage blocked with bars. Opposite the bars is a wooden pillar with a switch that's blocked by another piece of wood. You need to open both the bars and this switch. Go to the west side of the room now, where there are stairs leading into a really dark torture chamber. Inside, head for the west end. There's a switch here which clears the way to the switch on the pillar in the large room with the lava, and also opens the bars blocking the south passage. Go back to the large room and enter the south passage, which leads to a round area with seven cages. In the centre of the cages is a wooden pillar with a concealed switch. Go back out to the lava room, and press the switch on the wooden pillar. Each time you press this switch, one of the cages opens, so press the switch seven times and kill the slaughtaurs that spew out. Once all seven cages are opened, a switch appears in the pillar in the centre of the seven cages. Press this switch and two new passages will open on the west side of the lava room. These pas-

sages lead to the walkway above the torture chamber. Now go up the stairs on the southern passage, go round the corner and take the second turn on the left. This leads to four rooms, the farthest of which, on the northwest, has a secret door on the west wall. Go back to the ledge now, and head to the east, along the northern part of the ledge. A new passage has opened on the left, which has a different texture to the rest of the wall. Go down this curving passage to a room with several monster-filled cages at the sides. There's another passage immediately to the right that leads to another room with Chaos Serpents and cages around the sides. Stairs from one of those cages lead to the room to the east of the lava room. If you go down the stairs at the far end of that room, you'll get back to the lava room.

BOTTOMLESS PIT

For now, return to the first room with cages at the sides. Examine the cages carefully - as there's a hidden switch in one of them. Pull this switch and a new passage has opened somewhere along the passage that you came in along. Walk down the steps in the new passage, to a curved room with a slimy river. Jump into the river now and follow it downstream. Keep going







and you'll fall into a pit! Hang on while you tumble into the bottomless pit...

EFFLUVIUM AGAIN

You get warped to a new part of the Effluvium. Many new places have opened, and it's time to explore them. Go out of the room and jump into the muck. Follow the current downstream. Along the way, you'll go through a



This is the switch that warps you to the Effluvium.

room with ettins. The door on the right takes you to the drain where you first entered the Effluvium earlier on, from the Gibbet. Go down the drain beside the portal and jump into the pool of muck at the end of the drain, just like before, and walk up the other drain on the opposite side. Now, the ledge on the left has opened. Climb on it, and go into the big, dark room. There are four tanks of muck here - jump onto the one closest to where you entered the room. Now you can reach the other two tanks on the far side of the room by jumping across the ledges from here. There's a winch between the two tanks on the far side. Turn it now and the muck







will drain way from these two tanks. Jump into the northwest tank. There's a portal in the room beyond that takes you to back to the Castle of Grief. You'll come out in a hidden room at one end of the Castle's moat. You can raise the wall to get out onto the moat and into the Castle. For now, step back into the portal to get back to the Effluvium. The portal takes you to the west side of the room with the four tanks. Jump onto the southwest tank now. There's also a winch between this tank and the southeast tank - turn it to drain out both of them. The southwest tank leads a room beyond with a handle on the wall. Open this wall and you'll see another room behind the muck drain with a Brown Serpent. Watch your step, as there's a dark pit in front of you which you must jump over to get to the room with the Brown Serpent. This room has a waterfall and a rusty pillar which is actually a lift. Activate it to lower it, and it will take you up to a door which opens into one of the ledges beside the drain with the portal to the Gibbet. Don't go back to the Gibbet now, as you haven't solved the puzzle yet. Go back to the room with the waterfall, and climb on the ledge where the Brown Serpent was. Notice the wall here that has a handle on it. Pull it open to reveal a portal.

FORSAKEN OUTPOST AGAIN

The portal takes you to the Forsaken Outpost. Unless you feel like bashing up more monsters, don't break the stained glass walls. There are baddies behind them but only one or two items. The rusty wall at the end of the room opens out to a room with a secret window. As you approach the rusty wall, you'll get a message that something has opened on the Gibbet. Step back into the portal that leads back to the Effluvium, and then take the portal in the Effluvium that goes to the Gibbet. Now you're ready to solve the final puzzle in this episode, so get on over to the lair of the second Heresiarch.

THE HERESIARCH'S LAIR

Go to the Axe Key room, which is at the north side of the Gibbet. On the left is a circular wall with flechettes on green pillars. If you walk to the south side of the circular wall, a small room will open some items inside. On the right side of the room is a cage with some monsters inside and a pillar. If you've solved all the puzzles so far, the southeast corner of





this cage will be open. Go inside and the pillar lowers, revealing the Axe Key. Grab the key and go to the door of the Heresiarch's Lair, which is the locked door in the central area. Now you're ready to face the Heresiarch. Once you go in, there's no return until you kill the Heresiarch. Enter the Lair and kill the monsters there. Now, go up to the throne and jump on top of it when you grab the Icon of the Defender. This opens pillars at the sides of the room with lots of Afrits. Kill them, and Chaos Serpents will teleport into the room around the throne. Next, a wall behind the throne opens with a big star of lava on the floor and lots of quartz flasks lying around. The Heresiarch is on top of the star, ready to kick the kack out of you. Refer back to last month's part of the guide for tips on dealing with the Heresiarch, so give subs a call if you're missing that issue. After you kill him, the portal behind the lava star opens, leading to episode five.

EPISODE FIVE: THE NECROPOLIS

Your former masters, Zedek, Traductus and Menelkir, are waiting for you in their tombs. Each of them represents one of the three character classes in the game, and you must enter their tombs and defeat each of them. Only then can you reach your goal - to enter Korax's stronghold and destroy him. Each of the tombs has its own puzzles, traps and monsters which you have to deal with before you actually fight the master. Before you start







This switch means trouble. Most of them do, unfortunately.

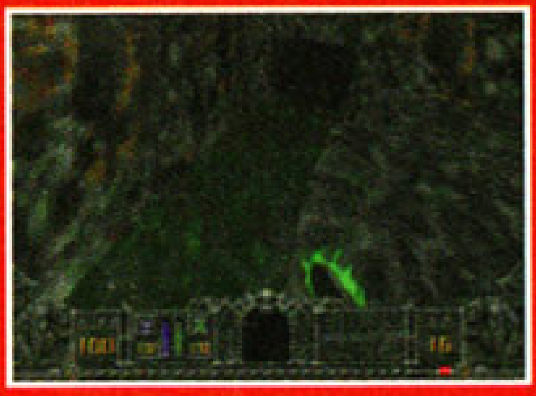


solving the puzzles in the three tombs, however, you might want to visit the Vivarium. It's only accessible only before you visit any of the three tombs, and there's a fair amount of goodies in there, as well as a full compliment of monsters. After you enter any one of the tombs, the portal to the Vivariumus is sealed off forever.

THE VIVARIUM

The portal to the Vivarium is on the southeast corner of the Necropolis. Get your best weapons ready before stepping into the portal, as the Vivarium isn't a nice







place when its inhabitants are still alive. There's a large area with loads of power ups on the south side of the Vivarium - behind you when you first enter the level. To get there, go to the east or west sides of the Vivarium where there are a lot of traps waiting to catch you unawares. Watch for the round, yellow projectiles - these are porkalators that you must get hit by to continue. In pig-shaped mode, jump out of the traps area and crawl through the hole on the east side of the wall with many symbols. This leads to the area with the power ups, but it conveniently doesn't open the wall and let the baddies in. After the porkalator wears off, you can get out again by opening the wall with many symbols from the inside.

THE EXIT

There is a dark area on north side of the Vivarium. Shoot at the walls under here and it will lower. Step on, and when it rises again, walk to the pillar in the middle, where there's a maulotaur statue. It will light up and door behind will open. There's a portal behind this door that leads back to the Necropolis.

TOMB OF MENELKIR

The portal to the Tomb of Menelkir is on the east side of the Necropolis. Enter the door with the pillars at the sides. There is a large door at the far end of the following room. Go and open it. It will start to open, and





then close again - you then get a message saying, "The portal has been sealed. Choose your fate." Eight switches will appear in the room. One of these switches will open the door - the others will open small rooms at the sides with Dark Bishops in them. Once the door is open, go inside, grab the Krater of Might and step into the portal.

EIGHT SYMBOLS

You start in a circular room with four symbols on the wall. Look at the symbol on the pillar in the centre of the room. Find the symbol on the wall that matches this one, and activate it. This will open the next room. Hit the wrong switch and a load of Ettins will warp in to give you some grief. The next room is an icy circular room with two pools and four switches. There are four different symbols on the switches. Look at the map and find the switch which resembles the shape of the room. Activate it, and the four switches sink into the water. This is one fourth of the puzzle in this tomb. Go to the third room now, which is triangular room and has a symbol on the pillar in the middle. Find the matching symbol on the wall and activate it to open the next room. The fourth room is a circular room with a deep pit. There's a magic blue bridge that lets you







ABOVE LEFT: This is the second of the two Heresiarches. You met his mate back in episode three.

get to the pillar in the middle, which has four symbols on it. Again, look at the map. What does this room look like? Find the symbol with this shape and activate it. Now, go to the fifth room, which is another triangular room. By now, you should now what to do - activate the symbol on the wall that matches the symbol on the pillar in the middle. The sixth room is another circular room. I don't think I need to repeat myself here. You should know which switch is the right one. The seventh room is another triangular one, and the eight is another circular room. Again, check the shape of the room to find the right switch. This time, however, after you activate the switch, something new and tremendously exciting happens. Not really, but four new switches appear - one in each of the four circular rooms. You can press any of these four switches, as they all do the same thing. They all activate lifts in all of the four circular rooms. Step on one of them, which will take you to...

MENELKIR

There's a pillar in the room, which will open layer by layer. Menelkir is standing there, ready for battle. Depending on which character class you're playing and what difficulty setting you use, Menelkir may either be using his Bloodscourge or his Arc of Death. Kill him, and a pillar will lower with the Sigil of the Magus on it - grab it and head for the portal which takes you back to the Necropolis.



TOMB OF TRADUCTUS

The portal to the Tomb of Traductus is in the north-eastern area of the Necropolis. Open the door there which leads through to a dark chamber. There's a rusty crate in the northeast corner of this room that's different from all the others. Step on it, and it will lower, revealing a hidden switch at the bottom - pull it to open a wall. There's a lift behind this wall that leads down to a rocky area. There's an opening at the north side of this area. Go through the opening and turn left. There are stairs here that take you up to the ledge where a Brown Serpent was shooting down at you earlier. Go right on the ledge, and you'll find a a switch in the corner - pull it and the portal to the Tomb of Traductus opens downstairs. Go back down and enter the Tomb.



Using the map is important here, as the layout of each of the circular rooms is a clue towards solving the puzzle here. Menelkir awaits after the puzzle is solved.

THREE SWITCHES

You start in a dark cavern. Follow the passage and turn right when it forks - the left passage leads to the portal that returns you to the Necropolis. The right passage opens into a room, and the entrance to the Tomb is ahead. Go down the long passage to the end and the floor will lower. After killing the Dark Bishops, jump down to the bottom. This is a triangular area with a door on the north side of the triangle. Go in and observe the three switches behind the door. The middle switch opens the area inside the triangle where Traductus is. The other two switches open two other areas on the east and west faces of the triangle. The area on the west is a spiral staircase with a Falcon Shield at the top. The area on the east also has stairs, that lead to a few small rooms. Walking inside the first room will open a few other rooms. You can find the Icon of the Defender here, among other things.



TRADUCTUS

Once you pull the middle switch, the area inside the triangle opens and Traductus appears. Watch out for his Wraithverge, and you could also do with Discs of Repulsion to keep those ghosties away. After you kill Traductus, a pillar lowers with a Holy Relic on it. Don't forget to take it with you. The elevator on the south end of the triangle is activated now, so go back up and step into the portal that takes you back to the Necropolis. To get out of the Brown Serpents area in the Necropolis, pull the switch opposite the portal. This lowers the elevator you came down on. Now you can continue your quest.

TOMB OF ZEDEK

There's a door on the southwest of the Necropolis which leads to a long corridor with lots of centaurs. The portal to the Tomb of Zedek is at the end of the corridor.

THE PUZZLE

When you first enter the Tomb of Zedek, you are in a a long corridor with some rusty pillars towards the end. If you look at the map, the shape looks like a giant Quietus. Walk to the end of the corridor where there's a door. As you approach the rusty pillars, they will begin to move to the side. When they've all moved, the ceiling comes crashing down, then slowly rises after a while. The pillars will move back to their original position, indicating it is safe to proceed. There's a dark room behind the door, with many pillars in it. Activate the switch on the east wall, and go back to the corridor. Now a semi-circular corridor has opened on the east side of the Tomb. Go to the middle of the semi-circle and activate the switch there. This opens small rooms along the circular corridor with monsters inside them, and also opens another semi-circular corridor on the west side of the Tomb. Go to the middle of the semi-circle on the west, and activate the switch there. Just like the other switch, this opens small rooms along the corridor with monsters inside. Now go to the room on the west, where there's a switch and three grey squares on the wall. When you activate the switch here, the three grey squares start to rotate. When they stop rotating, memorize or write down the symbols on them - the selection is Star, Crescent or Circle. Now, go back to the large room with pillars. This time, the door will shut behind you. The ceiling will also start to move down. You only have a limited amount of time, so go to the west side of this room where there are also three grey squares. Turn these squares so that the symbols on them match the symbols you've just seen on the other three grey squares. Once you got the correct order of symbols, the ceiling will rise again.

ZEDEK

Now the door on the north side of the room will open. The tomb slowly opens, and Zedek steps forward... to give you a sound beating. After you kill him a pillar







will lower, with a Glaive Seal on it Pick this up and return to the portal leading to the Necropolis. Now go to the northwest of the Necropolis, where there's a door with a panel at the side. There are three outlines on this panel, each matching one out of the Glaive Seal, the Sigil of the Magus, and the Holy Relic. Fit these artifacts on the panel, and the door will now open. There's a portal behind the door which leads to Korax. Collect the mana here, and gather all your resources together in preparation for the final battle. Enter the portal to the Dark Crucible, the stronghold of Korax.

EPILOGUE: DARK CRUCIBLE ENTRANCE

The entrance to Korax's stronghold has a crimson red sky, pitch black shadows, and corpses on spears. Even the bridge is swinging. But you've come this far, and there's no turning back. Go across the bridge and enter the door. There are three switches here - one by the stairs, and two at the sides of the room. If you pull the two switches at the sides, and then pull the switch by the stairs, mana will appear in front of the two switches. On rare occasions, you may even get a Krater of Might or a Mystic Urn if you're lucky.

KORAX

The strange echoing sound that you heard when you first entered the Dark Crucible is the sound of Korax. Open the door in front and there's a big hall in front of you. On the opposite side is none other than the long-sought Korax! Dont't just stand there, as he shoots loads of fireballs with his many arms and the fireballs con-







verge into a single blob of death that can kill you with one hit. He can fire lightning upwards with his arm to control different traps in the hall, and besides this, there are also crushers scattered around the hall. After you hurt him enough, he teleports away like a coward and opens two pairs of rooms on the far east and west sides of the hall. These rooms are jam-packed with countless ettins and centaurs. They'll come swarming on top of you, so you'll need many Discs of Repulsion to keep them from stampeding you to death as you shoot at them. Once you finish off these troops, the doors on the north side of the hall opens to reveal another big hall beyond. Korax now teleports between several locations in both halls, and sends more of his troops from another two pairs of jam-packed rooms in the second hall. This time, they are Chaos Serpents, so watch out as they literally rain fireballs on you. Also be careful when you're running back and forth attacking the monsters. Korax can turn most of the floors in the two halls into lava, and activate fireball traps. After you litter the two halls with the carcasses of the Serpents, Korax will begin to summon more monsters. Dark Bishops will appear, as well as invisible Chaos Serpents and invisible centaurs. When you reach this point, don't waste your ammo on these monsters. Kill just enough of them to keep them from getting in your way, and concentrate on Korax. You should have kept enough Kraters of Might to keep you going, and there are also a few around the two halls.

CONCLUSION

When Korax, the Dark Crucible quakes and trembles, and a portal opens at the far end of the second hall. Stay away as you kill him, as a swarm of ghosts explodes from his carcass. After the ghosts are gone, step into the portal. Now you can at last sit back and at last watch the conclusion.

Fighters MegaMix

BEAN SPECIAL

Okay, we're not totally infallible you know and when it comes to minor hiccups, SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE are big enough to admit when they've made an error. As a number of eagle-eyed readers have been quick to point out, our extensive Fighters MegaMix guides in issues #19 and #20 failed to mention Bean's moves. So this month we're printing the full player's guide for this devious duck as well as the methods required for selecting two other sneaky secret characters. How's that for customer service then?

BEAN



The other half of the Sonic Fighters contribution to Fighters MegaMix is Bean, the comical cartoon duck with a massive cranium. As with Bark, you shouldn't underestimate this fighter - although large when compared to other combatants, he's very fast and even capable of running up walls! Additionally, he's able to lob bombs at unsuspecting opponents. Fortunately, it's possible for players to guard against these incendiaries - unlike Janet's bullets and Siba's scimitar strikes.

SPECIAL ATTACKS	METHOD
Double Mouth Smacker	PP
Triple Mouth Smacker	PPP
Mouth Smacker Lash	PPPP
Headbutt Attack	PPPPP
Headbutt Straight	PPPP⇨P
Dizzy Straight	⇨P
Dizzy Straight Bombs	⇨PP
Dizzy Upper	⇧P
Dizzy Upper Bombs	⇧PP
Double Bomb Throw	⇨⇨P
Double Kick	KK
Triple Kick	KKK
Side Kick	⇧K
Double Side Kick	⇧KK
Triple Side Kick	⇧KKK
Bomb Shot	⇨K
Horse Kick	⇨⇨K
'Go That Way' Kick	K+G
Hyper Start	⇦P+K
Rocket Missile	⇦K (wall behind you)





Bean is yet another of the many secret characters to be discovered in Fighters MegaMix.





Bean and Bark may be from Sonic the Fighters but will AM#2's cartoon coin-op ever make it to Saturn. Maybe...

DOWN ATTACKS (opponent down)	METHOD
Bomb Throw	⇩P
Stomp	⇩K

JUMPING ATTACKS	METHOD
Hop Punch	⇧P
High Kick	⇧K
Double Jump Kick	⇧KK
Skip Kick	⇧KKK
Hop Kick	⇧K (before you reach ground)
Mouth Smacker Dive	⬆P
Aerial Bomb	⬆P
Stomp Dive	⬆K
Air Kick	⬆K
Air Hyper Start	⬆P+K

REGULAR ATTACKS	METHOD
Mouth Smacker	P
Kick	K



When fighting in enclosed arenas, trap opponents in the corners by constantly hurling bombs at them.

THROWS	METHOD
Mouth Smacker Shot	P+G*
Moretsu Attack	⇦⇨⇦P+G*
Foot Stamp	⇩⇩K+G*
*works only on Bean, Bark and VF Kids	

DASH ATTACKS (during dash)	METHOD
Dashing Mouth Smacker	P
Horse Kick	K

EXTRA	METHOD
Bean Warp	⇩⇩G+P+K
Wall Mouth Smacker Dive	P (running up wall)
Wall Stamp	K (running up wall)
Wall Climb	⇨⇨ (running towards wall)





He may be a bomb-chucking duck but Bean can be one tough customer. Also watch out for his nasty headbutts. Ouch!

REAR ATTACKS (back to opponent)	METHOD
Turning Low Punch	P
Turning Punch	G+P+K
Turning High Kick	K



PLAY AS MR MEAT

After turning on your Saturn 30 times with Fighters MegaMix inside, pick Kumachan using the X or Z button. You'll now be able to play as this large piece of ham, complete with floating comedy hands and feet.

PLAY AS THE PALM TREE

To fight as the AM2 logo, you must ensure you've played the game for 84 hours. Now select Kumachan by pressing Z. Unfortunately, this poor piece of vegetation has no limbs whatsoever!

*Note: Both Mr Meat and the Palm Tree have exactly the same moves as Kumachan.

OUT NOW

INDEPENDENCE DAY
BY EA £44.99 59%

It has to be said that Electronic Arts have left this just a bit too late. The BIG movie of last summer is now just a fleeting memory in the minds of most moviegoers. Perhaps if the company had tied it in to the video release in February they could have gleaned some measure of commercial success. However it was not to be. Unfortunately, Independence Day has only got itself and its quality as a videogame with which to sell itself with and quite frankly it's not good enough.

The basic premise of the game is that you, the player, are a US airforce pilot (presumably the Will Smith character from the film whose name no-one can remember) and your job is to fly around the underside of the alien saucers floating around the world, taking out their shield generators and blowing them up. During the process you get to blow up UFOs too.

As missions progress you enter every more dangerous territory, armed with superior aircraft - right up until you're penetrating the alien mothership using a captured UFO. Just about the only bit that IS like the film.





Although the myriad two-player modes are to be applauded (yes it supports the link-up cable no-one can buy) ID4 just lacks the enjoyment and playability of either a shoot 'em up or a flight sim, being a poor mixture of both game styles.

Curiously enough despite owning the LaserDisc of ID4, the only piece of dialogue I can remember is "I'm just anxious to get up there and whup ET's ass". Should you purchase this I daresay you'll be saying much the same thing - just switch ET for EA.

JONAH LOMU RUGBY
BY CODEMASTERS £44.99 91%

Codemasters took a big gamble when they procured the services of Rage Software to produce one of their biggest licensed games of the year. Since the success of the original Striker, the company have definitely gone downhill from mediocre (in its Megadrive Ultimate Soccer days) down to gutter level (with the abysmal Saturn Doom). Happily though the developers have made great strides in restoring their reputation (just don't mention Trash-It) with Electronic Arts' pretty damn decent Darklight Conflict (see the review this issue) and of course Jonah Lomu Rugby. Jonah's definitely one of the best sports simulations available for the Sega Saturn and what's more you're guaranteed not have a game like it in your collection already, in that it is the only game of Rugger you can play on the Saturn. And it's an excellent game too.

Rugby's an exciting, fast-paced game and this simulation is as well by virtue of its intuitive and super-easy-to-understand control system. Add in a system designed to ease the player into the game coupled with some extraordinarily effective 3D graphics and we have a videogame that's basically the best thing available this month.

This effective, well-timed release will do no harm to Codemasters' excellent reputation for quality videogaming and the company are to be congratulated on bringing it to the Saturn when so many third parties are deserting the Sega machine.

GAME OF THE MONTH SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE





ACTUA SOCCER CLUB EDITION
BY GREMLIN £44.99 70%

SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE now has a new rule: we're not allowed to take the mickey out of our unfortunate competition. However we can't let Saturn Power's Actua Soccer demo pass without comment. In particular how Alan Shearer and Les Ferdinand appear to have swapped skin colour and how Peter Schmichael's hair has been dyed jet black! If you were unfortunate enough to buy the mag, check it out. Alan Shearer - England hero and the world's most prolific goal scorer - and they got his skin colour wrong. D'oh!

Still, onto the game proper. Let's make no bones about it: everyone wants a football game with all the Premiership teams in it. I know I do. So what Gremlin have done is to take Euro 96 and put the appropriate teams in. It's that simple. The gameplay, which although pleasant isn't likely to set the world on fire, is identical to Euro 96. The graphics are virtually the same too.

There's very little to add once you've played the game. I always thought Euro 96's control system was a bit too restricted and I haven't changed my opinion having played this. I also think it's very cheeky that Gremlin have added so very little to the game. I mean Sega WorldWide Soccer '97 is over nine months old and you'd think Gremlin would have tried to supersede it. Instead they've just changed some teams and left their game as lacking in gameplay as it always has been.

Bottom line: don't get this, get SWWS '97, and if you want Premiership Teams wait for SWWS '98, out this October. Actua Soccer just doesn't have the quality of gameplay we demand!



THE CROW: CITY OF ANGELS
BY ACCLAIM 44.99 47%

Acclaim have released some great games for the Saturn. Alien Trilogy's still pretty good post Exhumed and the Taito double act of Bubble Bobble Pack and Puzzle Bobble are great, great games. Recently though, the company has deluged us with all manner of turkey-like software such as Iron Man/X-O Manowar, Batman Forever and Dragonheart.

The latest poultry-like addition to Acclaim's range of Saturn stinkers is The Crow: City of Angels, based on the er, "hit" movie (place the consonant of your choice before the H).

What we are alleged to have here is a cross between Die Hard Arcade and Resident Evil, being that the main characters are all polygon constructs and the backdrops Capcom-like in a 2D stylee.

The game received 67% from our man Lee Nutter last issue, but the passage of time has not been kind to The Crow and I feel duty bound to plunder it of 20%. Why? Because it's really awful. The gameplay is sloooow and plodding, the moves and animation stilted and poor, and the characters stick out hugely from the backgrounds. Whereas the



programmers have added in tons of lighting effects on the 2D bits, it isn't reflected on the 3D characters, so they look almost like deformed holograms. And the definition on the fighters is REALLY bad. Acclaim MUST improve.

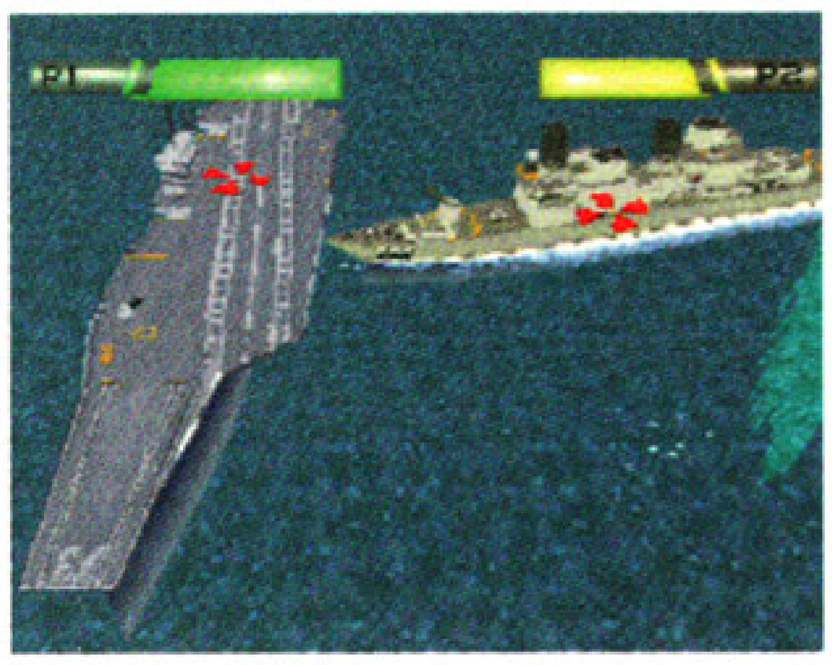
BATTLE STATIONS
BY EA 44.99 49%

A curious oddity from Electronic Arts and no mistaking it. This game is basically a kind of 3D Battleships with extra bits added on to it. Unfortunately, the concept is as flawed as the execution.



Two modes are available: Arcade and Campaign. The former game variation is simplistic on the verge of pointless. You take on a human or CPU foe in your ocean-bound vessels and basically waggle the d-pad around pressing buttons randomly. Campaign mode promises slightly more intrigue in that you get a map to negotiate before taking on the vessels in the familiar one-on-one battling stylee.

The one redeeming factor with Battlestations concerns the quality of the visuals. The game is based around various types of sea-faring vessels - and all of them are portrayed very nicely



indeed with tons of detail on the texture maps and a nice frame rate. The overall impression this game gives is pretty good to the casual observer, but the novelty is soon overcome. Unfortunately, nice though the graphics are, little heed is paid to the concept of realism. Which is usually quite important in a game of this style.

Aircraft carriers are slow to turn but HUGE and well-armoured. Patrol Boats are fast but stand no chance right? Wrong. Manoeuvrability is all-important and thus we see the tiny ship easily take out the carrier. Considering the strategy leanings this game professes to have, it's very hard to believe that this kind of situation çan arise.

Electronic Arts started out the year well with Soviet Strike but they really need to pull their socks up because I can't see anyone wanting to own software of this quality. Unless it has the FIFA name on it. The recently competed Darklight Conflict is cool, but EA's general standing is looking shaky on Saturn.

KING OF FIGHTERS '95

BY SNK £39.99 89%

In Japan SNK have released Saturn versions of all of their greatest arcade games. All of the recent Samurai Shodown and Fatal Fury games are available for the Sega machine and games like the awesome Metal Slug really deserve worldwide releases. So where are the European SNK titles. Well, it's certainly a better late than never approach with King of Fighters '95 - the first Saturn title to make use of the machine's cartridge socket with a dedicated ROM cart. Titles like this appeal to a die hard kind of gamer, as opposed to the more market-friendly Capcom titles, and as long as you love the arcade games, you won't go wrong with this conversion. Now how about a RAM cart and Metal Slug release, Sega?

Note: KoF '95 is ready to go, but licensing details with SNK might keep it off the shelves for a few weeks more.





ALSO OUT NOW

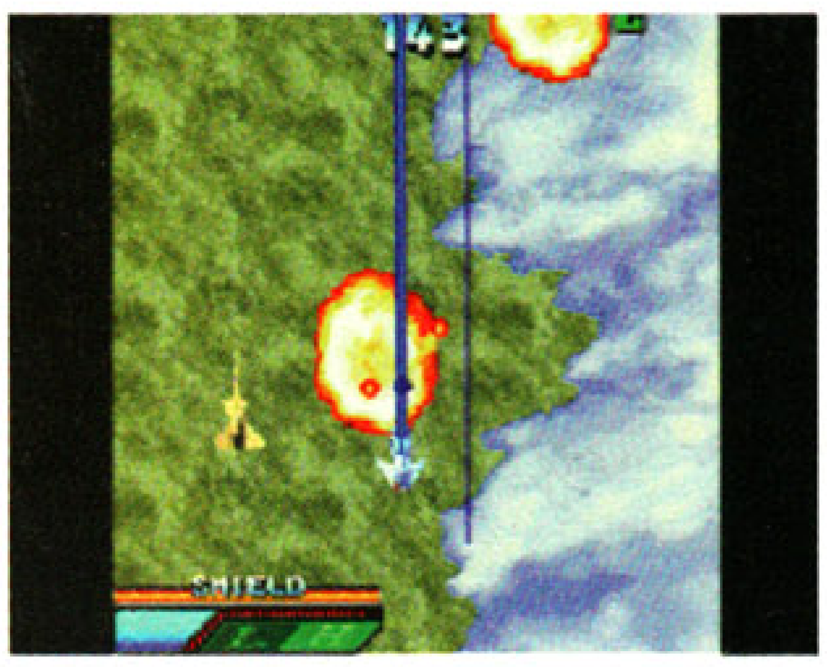
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Introducing...

SKULL FANG









Above: Select the Normal mode and players indulge in a spot of vertically scrolling blasting. However, obvious black borders intrude in on the action. Below: Switch to Arcade mode and play Skull Fang in its original form. However, you'll need to turn your TV on its side for the full effect.

The imminent release of Thunderforce V in Japan (scheduled to be launched on July 11) has seen a renewed interest in scrolling 2D shoot 'em ups, with the continuation of the hit Mega Drive series looking set to sell by the bucketload. The Saturn in particular has been inundated with a fair number of mediocre blasters in recent months but the poor quality of these titles, and many Western gamers' obsession with all things 3D, has seen none of them appearing on these shores.

On the one hand that's not necessarily a bad thing, most of these shoot 'em ups are simply watered-down versions of ancient coin-ops, offering nothing new in terms of gameplay or innovative features, yet many finger-pounding fans will buy any title from this genre. A case in point is Skull Fang, a classic example of over hyped nonsense and a title that few video gamers outside Japan will be familiar with. Based on Data East's '96 coin-op blaster, Skull Fang can be considered to be 'arcade perfect' a term that many titles strive to achieve but few manage to attain. In typical shoot 'em up fashion, players take to the skies in a high-tech fighter craft in order to stop the relentless march of a technologically superior foe. The standard action consists of endless waves of enemy ships keen to turn you into so much floating debris, culminating in an end-of-level shoot out against a massive boss. With two players on screen at once, multiple power-ups and even an original arcade mode (requiring you to turn your TV on its side, Raiden-style) and Skull Fang begins to sound fairly impressive.

However, as an example to all those readers phoning up and inquiring about obscure Japanese shoot 'em ups, Skull Fang has about as much depth as your average Jackie Collins novel. Skull Fang's appalling slowdown, unimpressive power-ups and nagging pauses during gameplay are all good reasons for Saturn owners to steer well clear. Fans of this genre with money to burn are well-advised to hold out for Thunderforce V or Ocean's X2, both of which are far superior games and should inject a bit of life back into the stale world of shoot 'em ups. You have been warned!

Multiple power-ups, massive bosses and two player action fail to elevate Skull Fang above the level of mediocre shoot 'em up.





Dear Newsagent,

In an attempt to harness the Power Cosmic, I shall require you to put aside a copy of SEGA SATURN MAGAZINE for me on a monthly basis. With this legendary periodical in my possession, I shall rule the galaxy! Oh, and I'll be in to collect it next week. Thanks.

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NEXT MONTH...



Cover-mounted CD, eh? Hell, why not! In addition to the CD antics, you can look forward to some more hardcore Sonic R activity with more exclusive interviews! We should be reviewing Resident Evil, and continuing the Capcom frenzy we'll have a huge feature on the cosmic Marvel Super Heroes! Oh, and in the best SSM tradition, we'll be interviewing the AM1 masterminds behind the incredible House of the Dead coin-op. PLUS: At long last we WILL have Sega Touring Car Championship!

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COMING SOON ON THE SATURN



Actua Soccer due June — Syndicate Wars due July — Mech Warrior 2 due June — Motocross Int'l due July
Micro Machines 3 due Aug — NHL Powerplay due June — Puzzle Fighter 2 due June — Panzer Dragoon Saga due July
Test Drive: Off Road due June — Heart of Darkness due October — Duke Nukem 3D due September — Jonah Lomu Rugby due June

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TOP TEN

1. MANX TT
2. DIE HARD TRILOGY
3. DIE HARD ARCADE
4. FIFA '97
5. COMMAND & CONQUER
6. THEME PARK
7. WORLDWIDE SOCCER '97
8. TOMB RAIDER
9. DARK SAVIOUR
10. THUNDERHAWK 2

Compiled from Gameplay sales 1/4/97 - 7/5/97

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